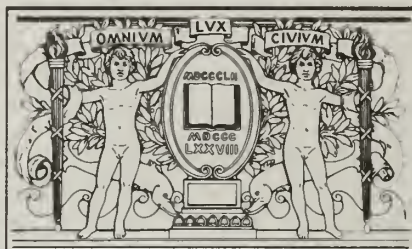


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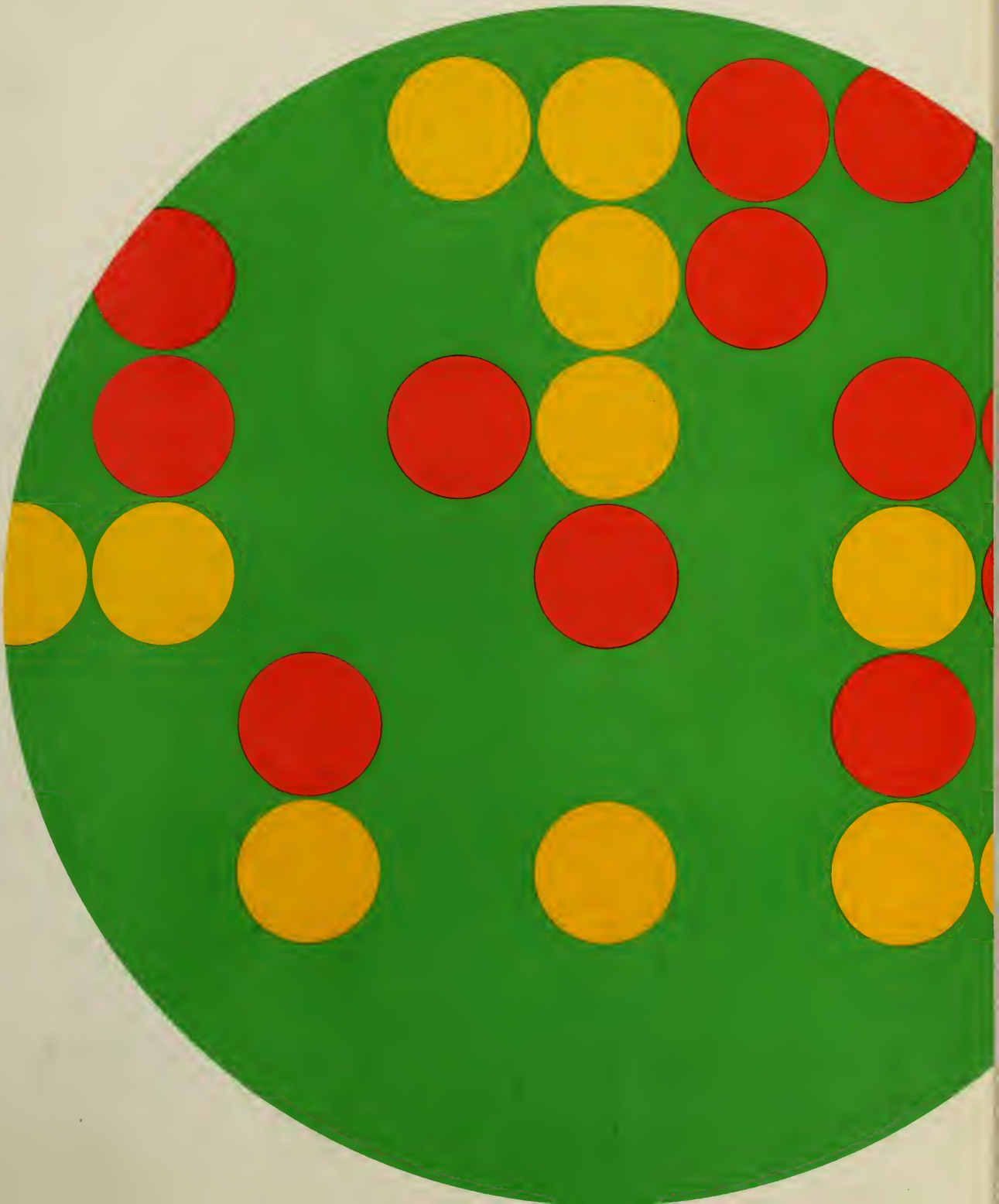


# How The People See Their City: Boston 1969

A Report of the  
Boston Area Survey

Survey Research Program  
Joint Center for Urban Studies of  
MIT and Harvard

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The Joint Center for Urban Studies, founded in 1959, is a cooperative venture of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University. A research organization, it brings together scholars from a wide variety of disciplines who share an interest in urban and regional problems. The publications program of the Joint Center includes books (published through The M.I.T. Press and Harvard University Press), monographs, reports, and reprints of articles on urban problems written by Joint Center members.

The Survey Research Program is an integral part of the Joint Center. It provides the staff and expertise to carry out cross-section sample surveys — collect field data, mainly in the Boston area, and to carry out coding, data processing, and analysis. Projects may be initiated by the Program staff, by affiliates of the Center, and by others in the research community. All work carried out by the Survey Research Program must be in the public interest.



# **How The People See Their City: Boston 1969**

A Report of The Boston Area Survey

Survey Research Program Joint Center for Urban Studies of  
MIT and Harvard

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Floyd J. Fowler, Jr., Assistant Director of the Survey Research Program, had primary responsibility for the preparation of this report. However, Mary Ellen McCalla Paul Shapiro, Karla N. O'Brien, Louise Lo and Edward Grossman made important contributions at different stages by organizing data and by editing and revising portions of the manuscript.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Survey Research Program was founded in 1968 as an integral part of the Joint Center for Urban Studies of M.I.T. and Harvard University. It provides a complete research facility with staff and expertise to carry out sample surveys, and a major part of its effort is focused on studying the city of Boston and the surrounding metropolitan area. The Program is expected to serve the needs of community groups in the metropolitan area as well as the local universities. It can benefit the community by providing information not otherwise available to city and town officials, planners, and community organizers, and by stimulating university interest in the city and its problems. It can benefit the universities by making available high quality data for scholarly analysis.

Each year, at least one survey focusing on basic issues in the metropolitan Boston area is planned. The first, emphasizing study of the city of Boston, was launched during the spring of 1969, and this report presents some of the results of that study.

No one survey, of course, can possibly tell us everything we might want to know; inevitably, it must concentrate on certain issues to the exclusion of others. This first survey provides information on what we consider to be some of the basic characteristics of the population and of the various neighborhoods of the city: movements in population over

the last ten years; the housing situation and people's feelings about their housing; attitudes toward the provision of services by the city; and lastly, the crime problem as seen by the public.

The survey provided a wealth of information, and it can be analyzed in many ways, from many standpoints. Here we have attempted to pinpoint some of the more salient features and to offer a general overview of the results.

## POPULATION CHANGES IN BOSTON DURING THE 1960'S

The central city of Boston, like so many other central cities, has been losing population over the last two decades. Yet, at the same time the total metropolitan population has been expanding rapidly. What does this mean for the city? What is the significance of this trend? In this chapter we shall examine what has been happening to the population of Boston, and what the effects have been on the character of the city.

### Population Decline

Population statistics are the simplest measures of the growth and stability of an area. However, it is not always easy to obtain comparable data for different points in time so that we can measure well the changes that occur. The United States Census is conducted every ten years, and we have data on Boston from the Censuses of 1950 and 1960; in due course we shall have comparable data from the Census of 1970. But in the meantime we may want to measure changes over the shorter period. The U.S. Census counts all people living in Boston, and it distinguishes between those who live in households (family units) and those who live in group quarters (for example, in college dormitories). The Massachusetts Census, which is conducted every ten years in mid-decade (1955, 1965) counts only those people who consider Boston as their permanent home; so it leaves

out of its Boston count, for example, students both from out of state and from elsewhere in the state. It also fails to distinguish between people living in households and those living in group quarters. Our own Boston Area Survey of 1969 is based on a sample. By its nature this was a sample only of people in households, so we cannot draw any direct comparisons between our figures and those of the Massachusetts Census. We can, however, make firm comparisons with the household data from the U.S. Censuses of 1950 and 1960.

Despite the problems of comparability in the available data, a picture of the overall patterns of change emerges. Table 1.1 shows how the total population of the city of Boston has altered since 1950. In the period between 1950 and 1960 there was a net loss of 100,000 people (compare columns 1 and 3 in Table 1.1). There was also, apparently, a net loss of about 100,000 between 1955 and 1965 (columns 2 and 4, Table 1.1). So it looks as though there was a consistent and probably rather even decline in population from 1950 through 1965. Since that date the decline seems to have halted. Our survey data for 1969 give a population estimate of 620,000 living in households; and we would add to that perhaps 35-40,000 living in group quarters,\* for an overall total of 655-660,000. If our figures are accurate, we find that there has been a net loss of only about 40,000 people since 1960. Yet between 1950 and

---

\* The Boston Area Survey does not provide an estimate of the population in group quarters; we have just assumed that this figure has not changed much in the past decade.

1965 the city appeared to be losing population at the rate of approximately 10,000 per year. We would conclude, therefore, that the loss did not continue after 1965 but rather halted and in all probability reversed itself to some degree.

There are two patterns of population decline in a city: there may either become fewer households, or the average number of people in each household may become less. While the vacancy rate in Boston rose slightly during the 1950's, there was an increase in the number of housing units. Overall, as a result, there was a slight increase in the total number of occupied housing units (Table 1.3). Between 1950 and 1960 there was also, however, a marked decrease in the average size of households in Boston, from 3.4 to 2.9 people per household (Table 1.2). A decrease in household size is the typical pattern when families with children are moving out of a city, to be replaced by single individuals and couples without children. The entire decrease in the population of Boston in the 1950's was associated with a decrease in the average household size.

The picture has been very different since 1960. During the past ten years, the average size of households in Boston has remained almost the same. But, as we have already indicated, there has been a net loss in population of about 40,000. It is our estimate that the decline in the past decade has been associated almost entirely with a decrease in the number of occupied households. In 1960 there were 224,432

occupied household units; in 1969, we estimate, there were about 210,000, a drop of over 14,000.

It is interesting to ask why there are fewer occupied housing units now than ten years ago. Is it because there are fewer places to live than there used to be? We estimate that the number of vacant units is slightly higher now, proportionately, than in 1960: 8 per cent as against 6 per cent (Table 1.3). However, this difference is relatively small: the decline in the number of households is primarily associated with a reduction in available living accommodations in the city of Boston.

#### The Effects of the Population Decline

In many cities the decline in population has meant the middle-class families are moving out, leaving behind the aged, the poor, particularly the Negroes, and young, unmarried people, who move out when they marry. This pattern was true for Boston during the period from 1950 to 1960. In 1960, the city, compared with the metropolitan area (Figure 1), had a lower concentration of families with children; a much higher concentration of Negroes -- about 80 per cent of those in the whole metropolitan area lived in the city; a greater concentration of the aged; and a lower average family income.

These statements are still true today. The city of Boston population has considerably lower incomes than the population of the total Boston area; there are far fewer families with children. However, the changes of t



FIGURE 1



OUTLINED AREA IS THE STANDARD METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA

1960's have not augmented these problems; and in some respects the population resources of the city are richer now than they were in 1960.

#### Household Composition

In 1960, as many as 25 per cent of all households in Boston consisted of one person; and only 30 per cent represented a complete family -- that is, two parents and one or more minor children (Table 1.4). The statistics for 1969 are somewhat different. We notice an increase in the proportion of families with children, though this is not nearly as high as the 47 per cent for the total Boston area. This is significant because it suggests that the population decline in the first half of the sixties and the movements into and out of the city since then have not represented the same exodus of families which occurred in the fifties. This fact is strengthened by the perhaps surprising finding that there are also fewer married couples without children in Boston now than in 1960.

It is also consistent to find in Table 1.5 that the age composition of the city has, if anything, shifted to include more young people. Although the changes are not large, it appears that children under 20 constitute a slightly larger portion of the population than they did in 1960; and the aged, those 65 or older, may have slightly

declined as a proportion of the population of Boston<sup>1/</sup> (Table 1.5).

In 1960, about 10 per cent of the population of the city was Negro. By 1969 the proportion had risen to about 18 per cent (Table 1.6). This change has been due both to a real increase in the Negro population--from 63,000 to over 100,000--and to a decline in the white population. Yet a study that was made in 1965 yielded an estimate of 17 per cent.<sup>2/</sup> This indication that there has been some stability over the last four years suggests that the Negro population has been moving in and out of the city at approximately the same rate as whites. Although the large majority of the Negroes in the metropolitan area are still located in the central city, and concentrated in just a few areas, the racial composition of the city seems to have stabilized.

### Socio-economic Factors

The differences between the population of Boston and the population of metropolitan Boston with respect to education, income, and occupational skills are so striking, that any discussion of this aspect of the city population must begin with this comparison. Less than 30 per cent of the metropolitan adult population failed to finish high school, compared to 40 per cent of the adults in Boston. Over half the families in the

---

<sup>1/</sup> In the Appendix, we indicate that there is a slight overrepresentation of families with children in our sample because the response rate was particularly high in this group. Eliminating this bias would reduce the differences in Tables 1.4 and 1.5, but only slightly - probably not enough to eliminate the apparent trend, and certainly not enough to indicate any decline in families with children since 1960.

<sup>2/</sup> "Black and White in Boston," Research Department, United Community Services (Mimeo).

metropolitan area had total family incomes over \$10,000 in 1968, compared with only 33 per cent of the families in Boston. Over half the employed males in the metropolitan area work at white collar jobs, compared with 38 per cent of the employed males who live in the city of Boston (Tables 1.7, 1.8 and 1.9).

These differences have important implications for the city in many ways: for example, the sophistication of the voting public, the kind and quality of services that will be demanded, and the ability of the population to meet the city's fiscal needs. Yet insofar as these population characteristics contribute to the problems of the city, the situation has generally improved in the last ten years. Despite the continued population decline, the level of education of adults living in Boston is considerably higher now than a decade ago. A quarter of the adults have been to college, only 40 per cent have not finished high school. In 1960, the figures were 15 per cent and 56 per cent respectively (Table 1.7). Incomes have also risen in Boston since 1960, as they have elsewhere in the country. The median family income is about \$2000 over \$5700, which was the median in 1960 (Table 1.8). This represents about a 33 per cent increase. Although this is not a remarkable change, the increase in income has been faster than the concurrent increase in the cost of living, which was up 27 per cent over the same period. Thus, the level of education in the population of Boston is substantially better now than in 1960, the real income of residents is somewhat better.

It is only in the area of the skill levels of jobs of Boston residents that things have remained fairly stable over the decade. Certainly things are no worse now. We estimate that 23 per cent of the employed males living in the city are working as professionals or managers, compared with 20 per cent in 1960. However, the change in skill levels are not as great as the education changes might lead one to expect (Table 1.9).

### Conclusion

The population of Boston households has probably declined from 657,000 to 620,000 in the past ten years. It is possible that there was an even greater decline to 1965 which has reversed itself. Our estimate is that the main reason for the decline is that there are 10,000 to 15,000 fewer dwelling units in the city now than in 1960.

Families with children in the city, however, are slightly more prevalent now than in 1960. The level of education and the income of families in the city have increased considerably. The 1960's have been a time of change for Boston, but in some important respects it was a change for the better.

TABLE 1.1

## POPULATION IN CITY OF BOSTON (1950-1969)

<u>Population</u>	<u>1950</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>1955</u> <sup>3</sup>	<u>1960</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>1965</u> <sup>3</sup>	<u>1969</u> <sup>2</sup>
Population in households and group quarters <sup>1</sup>	801,444		697,197		
Population in households only <sup>2</sup>	738,894		657,000		620,000
"Permanent residents" in both households and group quarters <sup>3</sup>		724,702		616,326	

1/ Source - U.S. Census.

2/ Sources - U.S. Census (1950,1960), Boston Area Survey (1969). These figures exclude those living in group quarters, such as dormitories and institutions.

3/ Source - Mass. Census.

TABLE 1.2

## AVERAGE SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD IN BOSTON (1950-1969)

	<u>1950</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>1960</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>1969</u> <sup>2</sup>
People per household	3.4	2.9	3.0

1/ Source - U.S. Census.

2/ Source - Boston Area Survey (1969)

TABLE 1.3

## HOUSING UNIT OCCUPANCY IN BOSTON (1950-1969)

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<u>Number of:</u>	<u>1950</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>1960</u> <sup>2</sup>	<u>1969</u> <sup>3</sup>
Total units	222,079	238,547	228,000
Units occupied	218,103	224,432	210,000
Units vacant	3,976	14,115	18,000
Vacancy rate	1.8%	6.0%	8.0%

---

1/ Source - U.S. Census (1950); figures indicate number of dwelling units--these numbers are slightly less than a comparable number of housing units.

2/ Source - U.S. Census (1960); figures indicate number of housing units.

3/ Source - Boston Area Survey (1969); these are projected estimates of numbers of housing units.



TABLE 1.4

COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS IN CITY OF BOSTON IN 1960 AND 1969 AND IN  
METROPOLITAN BOSTON IN 1969

<u>Household Composition</u>	<u>Boston</u>		<u>Metropolitan Boston<sup>3</sup></u>
	<u>1960<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>1969<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>1969<sup>2</sup></u>
One-person	25%	24%	18%
Married couple--no children	26	16	22
Married couple with children	30	35	47
Other types <sup>*</sup>	<u>19</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>13</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

\* Includes divorced, separated, and widowed adults with children, related and unrelated persons living together, et. al.

1/ Source - U.S. Census.

2/ Source - Boston Area Survey (1969).

3/ In this and subsequent tables, metropolitan Boston refers to the Boston Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (Figure 1), which is the U.S. Bureau of the Census definition of Greater Boston.



TABLE 1.5

## AGE OF BOSTON POPULATION IN 1960 AND 1969

<u>Age</u>	<u>1960<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>1969<sup>2</sup></u>
Less than 10	17%	17%
10 to 19	15	19
20 to 39	26	28
40 to 64	29	26
65 or older	<u>13</u>	<u>10</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%

1/ Source - U.S. Census.

2/ Source - Boston Area Survey (1969).

TABLE 1.6

## RACIAL COMPOSITION OF BOSTON POPULATION FROM 1960 TO 1969

<u>Race</u>	<u>1960<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>1965<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>1969<sup>3</sup></u>
White	90%	82%	80%
Black	9	17	18
Other	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

1/ Source - U.S. Census; the Census has since estimated that the Negro population was undercounted and could be as high as 10% or 11%.

2/ Source - Community Research Project (1965).

3/ Source - Boston Area Survey (1969).

TABLE 1.7

EDUCATION OF CITY OF BOSTON ADULTS OVER 25 YEARS OF AGE IN 1960 AND 1969  
AND OF METROPOLITAN BOSTON ADULTS IN 1969

<u>Education</u>	<u>Boston</u>		<u>Metropolitan Boston</u>
	<u>1960</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>1969</u> <sup>2</sup> (city only)	<u>1969</u> <sup>2</sup>
Less than high school graduation	56%	40%	29%
High school graduate only	29	35	39
Any college	<u>15</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>32</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

1/ Source - U.S. Census.

2/ Source - Boston Area Survey (1969).

TABLE 1.8

TOTAL FAMILY INCOME IN CITY OF BOSTON IN 1959 AND 1968 AND IN  
METROPOLITAN BOSTON IN 1968\*

<u>Total Family Income</u>	<u>Boston</u>		<u>Metropolitan Boston</u>
	<u>1959<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>1968<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>1969</u>
Less than \$3,000	17%	8%	5%
\$3,000-\$5,999	37	26	10
\$6,000-\$9,999	33	33	30
\$10,000-\$14,999	10	21	32
\$15,000 or more	<u>3</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>23</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
MEDIAN INCOME -	\$5,747	\$7,700	\$10,800

\* This table excludes one-person families.

1/ Source - U.S. Census (1960).

2/ Source - Boston Area Survey (1969).

TABLE 1.9

OCCUPATION OF ALL EMPLOYED MALES IN CITY OF BOSTON IN 1960 AND 1969 AND IN  
METROPOLITAN BOSTON IN 1969

<u>Occupation</u> *	<u>Boston</u>		<u>Metropolitan Boston</u>
	<u>1960</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>1969</u> <sup>2</sup>	<u>1969</u> <sup>2</sup>
Professional	12%	14%	26%
Managerial	8	9	15
Clerical	12	10	6
Sales	7	5	5
Skilled	20	24	21
Operative	21	20	12
Service	13	14	12
Laborer	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

\* Occupation classifications are defined by U.S. Census Bureau  
(see Alphabetical Index of Occupations & Industries, 1960, pp. XIX-XX)

1/ Source - U.S. Census.

2/ Source - Boston Area Survey (1969).

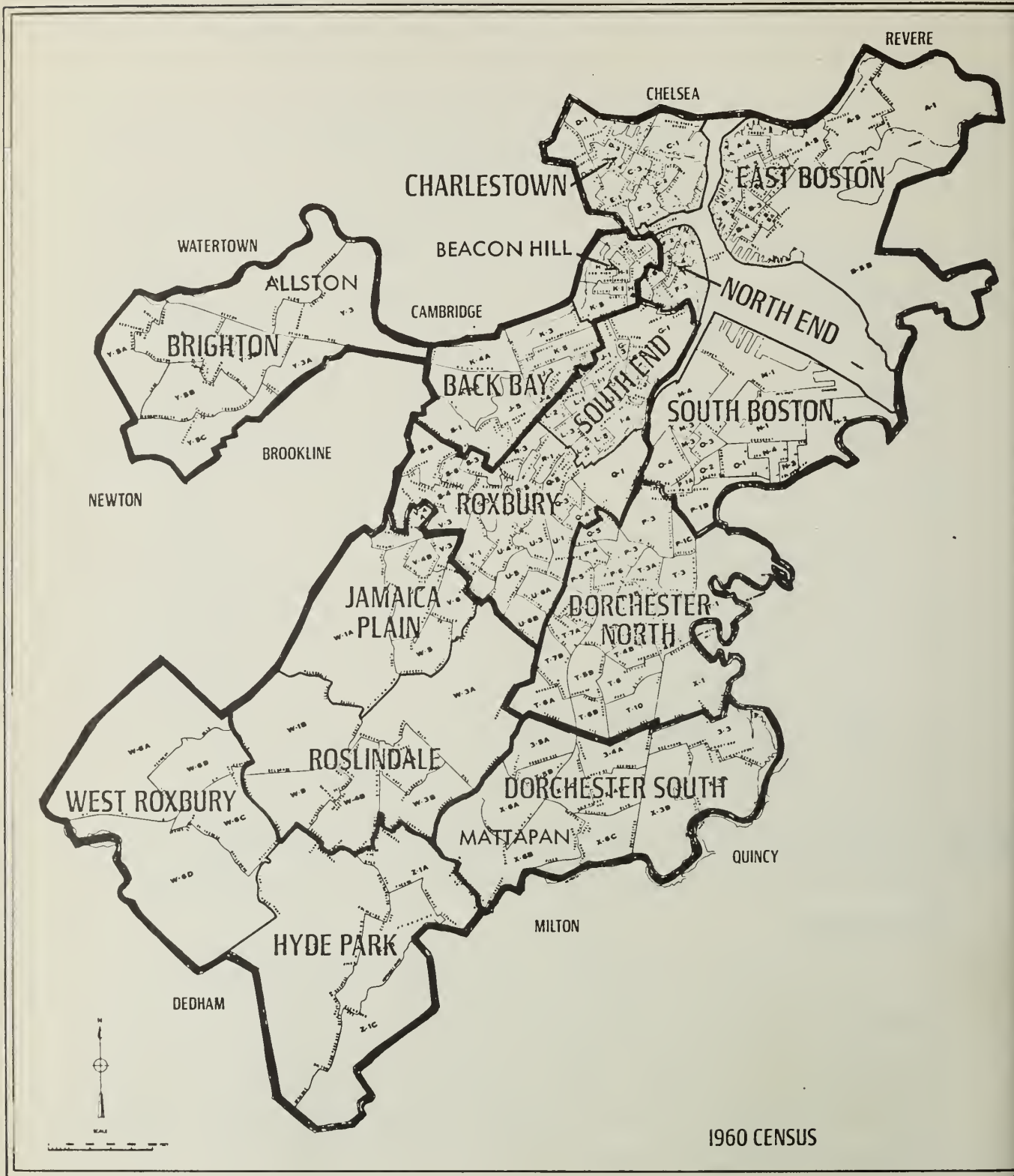
## AREAS OF THE CITY

For analysis purposes, we have divided the city of Boston into eight neighborhood areas. We have had to combine some of the "natural" neighborhoods in Boston in order to have enough cases in our sample for reliable descriptions. Areas we have combined are not necessarily alike, of course; but we have tried to combine areas that are contiguous and also that 'make sense' together. The eight areas, outlined on Figure 2, are:

1. Hyde Park-West Roxbury
2. Jamaica Plain-Roslindale
3. Dorchester-Mattapan
4. North Dorchester
5. Roxbury-South End
6. Allston-Brighton
7. Back Bay-Beacon Hill
8. Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston-North End

The last area is the most heterogeneous; but the combination was necessary because the populations are small in each of the component neighborhoods.

The tables in this section are complicated because there are so many areas. We believe that presenting the information for the smallest areas possible will be most useful to people. To simplify the discussion, we shall simply describe the main points in the tables, without attempting to discuss each figure in detail.



RESIDENTIAL AREAS IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

## Household Composition

There are only two areas in the city where as many as half the households include any children - Jamaica Plain-Roslindale and North Dorchester (Table 2.1). These areas by far have the highest concentration of families (Table 2.2). There are also quite a few middle-aged families (where the head is over 40) in Hyde Park-West Roxbury; but there are few young families there. On the other hand, the Roxbury-South End area includes a higher than average rate of under-40 families, but few other families.

At the other extreme, less than five per cent of the households in Back Bay-Beacon Hill include children. Almost half the households there consist of unmarried people under 40. Indeed, over half the households consist of only one person (Table 2.3).

The areas in which there are the most children, of course, tend, also, to be areas in which household size is larger than average. A key factor in this is the number of home owners vs. renters in an area. Overall in Boston, only 28 per cent of the households are occupied by the owner (Table 2.4). However, in three areas (Dorchester-Mattapan, Jamaica Plain-Roslindale and Hyde Park-West Roxbury) about half the people own their homes. In North Dorchester, home ownership is also above average. For the most part, these are the areas in which there are the most families with children.



## Backgrounds

People of Irish descent are substantial components of the population of each of the areas, except for Roxbury-South End and Back Bay-Beacon Hill (Table 2.5). Italians, however, are major components of the population in only three areas: Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston-North End, Hyde Park-West Roxbury and Jamaica Plain-Roslindale.

Jews, only 6 per cent of the population overall, constitute about a fifth of those living in Allston-Brighton, Back Bay-Beacon Hill, and Dorchester-Mattapan. White Protestants make up over a fourth of those living in Back Bay-Beacon Hill, their area of highest concentration.

Negroes constitute over three-fourths of the population in Roxbury-South End, about a third of the population of North Dorchester, and about a fourth of the population of Dorchester-Mattapan.

With respect to religion, we have mentioned the Jews; and the data on other religious groups generally follow the pattern one would expect from the nationality data. About 55 per cent of the adults in the city are Roman Catholic; and the rates are highest in those three areas cited as having a significant number of Italians (Table 2.6). There are the fewest Catholics in the only two areas where there are not very many Irish. The Roxbury-South End area has quite a few people who belong to religious groups other than the three major ones. In Back Bay-Beacon Hill, there are more than an average number of people with no religious preference.



The foreign-born - more than one in four adults in Boston - are spread rather evenly throughout the city (Table 2.7). However, native Bostonians - those born in the Boston area - are most concentrated in four areas: Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston-North End, Dorchester-Mattapan, Hyde Park-West Roxbury and Jamaica Plain-Roslindale.

#### Income and education

The data on total family incomes during 1968 are presented in Table 2.8 and Table 2.9. The first includes data from one-person families--those living alone or with unrelated roommates--with data from families of two or more persons. The second table presents data only for those families which include at least two related people living together.

One-person families have relatively low incomes as a group, so the figures in Table 2.8 are lower than those in Table 2.9. However, the relationships among areas are approximately the same in both tables. It is clear, for example, that incomes are highest in the Hyde Park-West Roxbury area. Families in the Dorchester-Mattapan area have the next highest incomes. Both areas have median incomes well above any of the other areas in the city.

At the other extreme, the lowest median income in the city is in the Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston-North End area. However, with the exception of the two wealthier areas mentioned above, there is not a great deal of variation between areas with respect to median

income. In both tables, six of the eight areas are clustered within a two thousand dollar range.

The most notable fact about the education picture in Boston is that over 60 per cent of the adults in Back Bay-Beacon Hill have been to college; while in the next highest area, Brighton, only 39 per cent of the adults have been to college (Table 2.10). At the other extreme, there are three areas in which close to half the adults did not finish high school - Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston-North End, and Roxbury-South End.

### Conclusion

Clearly, describing only the demographic characteristics of the people who live in an area leaves out many things that are perhaps more important: for example, the way people feel about their neighbors, and about their neighborhoods. However, much of the subsequent data are presented separately by residential area. An understanding of the differences between areas discussed in this chapter will be useful in understanding other differences which will be presented in later chapters.



TABLE 2.2

## STAGE IN LIFE CYCLE OF HEAD BY RESIDENTIAL AREA

Stage in Life Cycle of Head	Residential Area							Total City
	Allston Brighton	Back Bay- Beacon Hill	Charlestown- East Boston- South Boston- North End	Dorchester- Mattapan	Jamaica Plain- Roslindale	Hyde Park- West Roxbury	Roxbury- South End	
Under 40, unmarried, no children	17%	49%	8%	2%	3%	11%	18%	15%
40 to 64, unmarried, no children	16	14	9	16	10	8	12	12
Under 65, married, no children	11	13	10	19	10	20	12	13
Under 40, minor children	19	3	13	21	31	14	30	19
40 to 64, minor children	17	1	29	25	31	33	7	22
65 or older	20	20	31	17	15	14	21	19
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(64)	(70)	(78)	(48)	(59)	(72)	(73)	(545)



TABLE 2.4  
PERCENT OF HOME OWNERSHIP BY RESIDENTIAL AREA

Home Ownership	Residential Area							Total City
	Allston- Brighton	Back Bay- Beacon Hill	Charlestown- East Boston- South Boston- North End	Dorchester- Mattapan	Jamaica Plain- Roslindale	Hyde Park- West Roxbury	North Dorchester	Roxbury- South End
Own	13%	1%	19%	47%	52%	52%	32%	18%
Rent *	87	99	81	53	48	48	68	82
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
TOTAL	(63)	(69)	(80)	(51)	(60)	(73)	(78)	(75)
(N)								(549)

\* Includes those who live rent free

TABLE 2.5

## ETHNIC GROUP BY RESIDENTIAL AREA

Ethnic Group	Residential Area							
	Allston- Brighton	Back Bay- Beacon Hill	Charlestown- East Boston- South Boston- North End	Dorchester- Mattapan	Jamaica Plain- Roslindale	Hyde Park- West Roxbury	North Dorchester	Roxbury- South End
Black	7%	3%	1%	23%	*	*	35%	77%
White Protestant	16	27	11	5	19	16	7	6
Jewish	18	16	*	24	2	3	*	2
Italian Catholic	7	2	22	5	20	19	6	1
Irish Catholic	18	10	26	27	21	33	27	5
Other white	29	39	37	16	38	29	25	6
Other race	5	3	3	*	*	*	*	3
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(64)	(71)	(80)	(49)	(60)	(73)	(79)	(73)
								(549)

\* Less than 0.5%

TABLE 2.6

RELIGION BY RESIDENTIAL AREA

Religion	Residential Area							Total City
	Allston-Brighton	Back Bay-Beacon Hill	Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston-North End	Dorchester-Mattapan	Jamaica Plain-Roslindale	Hyde Park-West Roxbury	North Dorchester	Roxbury-South End
Roman Catholic	47%	34%	77%	45%	72%	70%	59%	22%
Protestant	18	27	18	24	16	22	31	60
Jewish	23	14	*	28	2	4	1	*
Other <sup>1/</sup>	12	25	5	3	10	4	9	18
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(64)	(69)	(80)	(52)	(60)	(74)	(78)	(75)
								(552)

\* Less than 0.5%

<sup>1/</sup> Includes those with no religious preference



### PLACE OF BIRTH BY RESIDENTIAL AREA

\* Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area - as defined by U.S. Census; generally "greater Boston area."





### EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF ADULTS BY RESIDENTIAL AREA

Educational Level	Residential Area							Total City	
	Allston-Brighton	Back Bay-Beacon Hill	Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston-North End	Dorchester-Mattapan	Jamaica Plain-Roslindale	Hyde Park-West Roxbury	North Dorchester		
Less than high school graduate	31%	16%	45%	36%	38%	24%	52%	46%	37%
High school graduate	30	23	42	34	35	40	32	25	33
Any college	39	61	13	30	27	36	16	29	30
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(64)	(69)	(80)	(52)	(60)	(74)	(78)	(75)	(552)

## HOUSING IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

### Introduction

One of the serious problems facing cities today is the provision of adequate housing for all its people. This is a complex problem because different people require different housing--some require more space, others less, for example--and the needs vary from one area of the city to another. Planners and city officials must have the answers to a whole range of questions before they can even begin to understand the extent of the problem and what has to be done.

Information gathered in surveys such as the Boston Area Survey cannot tell us what should be done, but it can provide a general description of the housing situation in the city at the present time. It can tell us such things as what condition the housing is in, what areas are overcrowded, what proportion of their incomes people pay for housing, and so on. Also, by comparing this information with that collected in earlier surveys, such as the United States Census of 1960, we can learn something of the dynamics of the situation--whether conditions have changed for the worse or the better or stayed about the same during the last few years.

## The Condition of Housing

In order to determine the physical quality of existing housing, we asked our interviewers to make an assessment of the condition of the housing units that they visited. We provided the following scale for their use:

Dilapidated: very substandard--has defects that are either critical or so widespread that the structure should be extensively repaired, rebuilt, or torn down.

Deteriorating: needs more repair than would be provided in the course of regular maintenance; defects are signs of neglect which lead to serious structural deterioration or damage if not corrected.

Generally sound: has no defects or only slight defects which normally are corrected during the course of regular maintenance.

Excellent

Based on this scale, 14 per cent, or about 1 unit in 7, of the occupied housing in Boston was rated as deteriorating or dilapidated (Table 3.1). Of much interest are the differences among areas. In the area that is worst off, Roslindale-Jamaica Plain, approximately one-quarter of the housing is substandard. Running a close second is Roxbury-South End, which has just over one-fifth of its housing in substandard condition. In contrast, Hyde Park-West Roxbury has almost no low quality housing, while the rest of the neighborhoods have fairly close to the (14%) average for the city as a whole.

Although we cannot make any firm comparisons of housing in 1969 with that in 1960,\* we can at least offer some general observations. The 1960 Census shows four areas where the condition of the housing was considerably above the city average, so that relatively low proportions were rated as "deteriorating" or "dilapidated" (Table 3.2). These four areas were Allston-Brighton, Hyde Park-West Roxbury, Dorchester-Mattapan, and Back Bay-Beacon Hill. Of these, only Hyde Park-West Roxbury remains so well above the average in 1969, while the other three are now about the same as the city as a whole. Two areas, North Dorchester and Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston-North End, which were about average in 1960, are still at about the same level in 1969. Roslindale-Jamaica Plain, on the other hand, seems to have somewhat more housing in poor condition now and has fallen below the city average. Roxbury-South End had considerably more than its share of dilapidated housing in 1960, and it still does; but the proportion has dropped so much that this almost certainly reflects some real improvement in this area.

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\* Unfortunately, we cannot determine precisely what changes have occurred in the condition of housing since 1960. This is for at least two reasons. First, the 1960 Census rated unoccupied dwellings as well as those being lived in, and we have only rated those lived in. It is reasonable to assume that the exclusion of vacant housing would tend to make our ratings higher, on the average, than the Census ratings of 1960. Second, and more serious, our scale differs from that used by the Census Bureau; ours was a four-point scale, whereas the Census had a three-point scale. We used the Census definitions of "sound," "deteriorating," and "dilapidated," but we also added the category "excellent" which probably means that the ratings of our interviewers were biased upwards to some extent. The existence of these differences in method makes us reluctant to attempt any precise comparison either for the city as a whole or for individual areas.



Thus, it seems that the condition of housing in various areas of the city have become more alike than they were at the beginning of the decade. To what degree this reflects improvement in the average condition of the housing and to what degree it reflects the deterioration of previously good housing we cannot say on the basis of the data that we have.

#### Housing Size and Overcrowding

An important measure of the adequacy of present housing is the degree of overcrowding that occurs. According to the American Public Health Association standards, any household that has more than one person per room is too crowded. In our survey we obtained information on the number of rooms and the number of people in each household so that we could make this analysis.

Comparing the different parts of Boston, there is, with the exception of Back Bay-Beacon Hill, little variation from area to area in terms of either the size of people's homes or the amount of overcrowding that exists. The median number of rooms for all occupied houses and apartments in the city is about 5.1 (Table 3.3). In the metropolitan area as a whole the median is higher at 5.8. As for the separate areas within Boston, the median number of rooms ranges from 2.8 in the Back Bay-Beacon Hill area to 5.9 in Hyde Park-West Roxbury and in Roslindale-Jamaica Plain. Five out of the eight areas have a median number of rooms of 5.0 or more.



Combining this information with the data on the number of people per household, we find that in about 7 per cent of all homes in the city, people are living in overcrowded conditions; that is, they have more than one person per room (Table 3.4). This figure varies from about 3 per cent of the households in the Back Bay-Beacon Hill area to about 10 per cent in Dorchester-Mattapan and Allston-Brighton. Five of the eight areas have overcrowding in at least 9 per cent of their households.

It is interesting to note that the area with the smallest homes, Back Bay-Beacon Hill, is also the area with the least overcrowding. On the other hand, the area with the most overcrowding, Dorchester-Mattapan, also has a relatively high median number of rooms: 5.8. In general, it does not appear that overcrowding is related to the average size of the housing units in the area.

There has been very little change in the level of overcrowding and in the average size of housing units in Boston as a whole since 1960. And, indeed, changes within individual areas have also been small. Two areas do appear to have a higher rate of overcrowding now than they did in 1960: Dorchester-Mattapan and Allston-Brighton. Both areas had less than the average level of overcrowding in 1960. Our survey shows that they now have more than the average level. However, the actual percentage change is small and may be due to chance variation in our sample.

There are only two areas that appear to have changed much in housing size since 1960. In Back Bay-Beacon Hill, the median number of rooms per housing unit has declined to 2.8; this area remains, as in 1960, the one in which the housing units are by far the smallest in the city. In contrast, in Roxbury-South End, the median size of housing units has increased considerably--from 4.3 to 5.0. Our data cannot tell us the reasons for this change; however, two factors are probably relevant. First, this is an area in which there has been considerable demolition of housing. It is reasonable to guess that buildings with one-and two-room apartments are particularly likely to have been torn down, thereby increasing the average size of the housing that remains. Second, there has been some conversion of apartment houses back into the large single-family homes that they once were. Whatever the causes, the increase in the average size of housing units in Roxbury-South End is probably the most significant change observable in Tables 3.3 and 3.4.

### Rent

The most dramatic change in the housing situation in the last ten years has been the increase in rents that people are paying (Table 3). To obtain information on housing costs, we asked families who rent their homes to tell us their gross monthly rent, that is, their rent including utilities--heat, gas, and electricity. To get comparable information from home owners, we asked for information on all mortgage payments, taxes,

home insurance, and utilities. From these data we were then able to estimate what proportion of their incomes people spend on housing.

Within the city of Boston as a whole, renters, who constitute about 70 per cent of the households, are paying about 67 per cent more for their rental housing now than they did in 1960. At that date, the median gross rent was around \$78 per month; now it is about \$130. Incomes and other prices have certainly risen during this period. However, the cost of living index compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics has risen by only 27 per cent during the last ten years, and the median family income in the city of Boston by only 33 per cent. It is interesting to note that the median rent for the total Boston area was the same in 1969 as for the city itself, though it was higher in 1960. Hence, rents have risen somewhat faster in the city of Boston than in the metropolitan area as a whole in the past ten years.

Rents have increased more in some areas within Boston than in others. For example, the median gross rent in Roxbury-South End has almost doubled, going from \$63 per month in 1960 to \$124 in 1969. In Hyde Park-West Roxbury, the median gross rent has risen from \$93 to \$174, an increase of 87 per cent. On the other hand, increases have been rather less steep, averaging around 50 per cent, in Back Bay-Beacon Hill, North Dorchester, Dorchester-Mattapan, and in Jamaica Plain-Roslindale. In Allston-Brighton and in Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston-North End

rents have increased at a rate that is about the average for the city as a whole.

The proportional increases over the last ten years do not necessarily tell us which areas are now paying high rents and which are now paying low rents relative to the rest of the city. In Roxbury-South End, for example, where the greatest per cent increase has occurred, rents are now about average: \$124. In 1960, rents in this area were low in relation to the rest of the city. The highest median rents are now found in Hyde Park-West Roxbury; rents are also relatively high in Allston-Brighton, Dorchester-Mattapan, and in Roslindale-Jamaica Plain. Back Bay-Beacon Hill is about average; but one must remember that the average number of rooms in this area is far below the average for the city, so the rents may be quite high in relation to apartment size. North Dorchester and particularly Charlestown-East Boston South Boston-North End, on the other hand, have lower than average rent levels.

#### Housing Cost as a Percentage of Income

There is another important aspect of housing costs, and ultimately it is perhaps the most significant one. This aspect is the proportion of their budgets that people spend on housing. Clearly, a monthly housing expenditure of \$120, for example, is a greater cost to a family with an annual income of \$6,000 than it is to a family with one of \$10,000. What is a relatively low monthly housing expenditure to one person will be a relatively high one to another, depending on the proportion of the family's income that it represents.

It is generally considered that people should not spend more than 25 per cent of their incomes on housing. In this survey, our estimates are general rather than precise; we shall look at those people who we estimate spend less than 20 per cent, those who spend from 20 per cent to 29 per cent, and those who spend 30 per cent or more.

According to our calculations, about two-fifths of families and single individuals in the city are paying less than 20 per cent of their incomes on housing and about a fourth are paying between 20 and 29 per cent. This leaves over a third who are paying at least 30 per cent (Table 3.6). There is a definite and strong relationship between the amount of money people earn and the percentage of their income they spend on housing. High proportional expenditures for housing are overwhelmingly a problem for low-income families and individuals. More than nine out of ten people who earn less than \$3,000 a year spend 30 per cent or more of their incomes on housing; and half of those who earn between \$3,000 and \$5,999 also pay those percentages. Most of the rest who earn less than \$6,000 pay between 20 and 29 per cent; relatively few pay less than 20 per cent.

The contrast between those who earn more and those who earn less than \$6,000 per year is striking. Among people with incomes of \$6,000 or more, we find a very substantial proportion paying less than 20 per cent: for those with incomes of \$10,000, this proportion is about one half; for those with incomes of \$10,000 or more the proportion is more than three-fourths. Almost no one with an income over \$10,000 pays more than 30

per cent of his income on housing.

It becomes very clear from these data that the majority of people who have incomes under \$6,000 per year cannot find suitable housing in Boston that will cost them less than 30 per cent of their incomes. Of course, this is more of a problem for some groups in the population than it is for others. The aged, who live on retirement incomes, and young families, whose incomes are still relatively low but whose housing needs are greater than the average, are the hardest hit: that is, they are the ones who most likely pay more than 30 per cent of their incomes for housing. (Table 3.7). On the other hand, young unmarried people, married couples without children, and middle-aged families (in which the head of the household is over 40 and at the height of his earning power) are less likely to pay too much for housing. It is interesting to discover that, overall, large households are no more likely than others to be spending a high percentage of their incomes on housing. The heaviest burden appears to fall, instead, on the one-person household--which so often consists of an older widow (Table 3.8). We also discover that Negroes do not differ much from whites in the proportion of their incomes that they pay for housing (Table 3.9), although the proportion is slightly higher.

Two areas of the city stand out as the ones where people are likely to be paying too much proportionately: Allston-Brighton and North Dorchester (Table 3.10). In Dorchester-Mattapan and Hyde Park-West Roxbury, on the other hand, families tend to pay a lower average



percentage of their incomes for housing. Part of the explanation for these differences involves home ownership. Home owners are much less likely than renters to be paying a high percentage of their incomes for housing (Table 3.11). The rate of home ownership is considerably higher in Dorchester-Mattapan and Hyde Park-West Roxbury than elsewhere in the city.

Finally, we have examined how the characteristics of the housing itself relate to the relative cost people pay for housing. We already noted that one-person households are likely to pay relatively too much rent. Thus, it is consistent to find that the smallest housing units, those with one or two rooms, are also those in which people tend to be paying too much (Table 3.12). In nearly two-fifths of these apartments, the tenants are paying 30 per cent or more of their income for rent. There are, in fact, more three-and four-room units available at under \$120 per month than there are one-or two-room units (Table 3.13), though perhaps not in the locations where single people would like to live. The largest housing units, however, also tend to be more expensive. While even some of these can be rented for under \$80 per month, roughly two-thirds of the five-and six-or more room units cost at least \$120 per month.

The data on condition of housing are perhaps less predictable; for we learned that people living in dilapidated and deteriorating housing are much more likely to pay a high proportion of their incomes on rent than those living in excellent and sound facilities (Table 3.14). There

seems to be a relationship between the amount of rent paid and the quality of the housing (Table 3.15). At rents below \$120 per month, relatively more of the housing is in substandard condition; at \$120 to \$159 rent, nearly three-quarters of the housing is sound; and at \$160 or more, over two-fifths of the housing is excellent. This shows that when people are paying too much for housing, it does not mean that they have decided to pay for housing that is larger or in better condition than they should try to afford. Rather, they are forced by the lack of satisfactory, inexpensive housing to pay as much of their income as is required (more than they can afford by normal standards) to obtain liveable quarters.

In summary, then, we can say that, in general, the proportion of his income that a person spends on housing depends primarily upon his income. Most of those with incomes over \$6,000 per year can find housing in Boston that will cost them less than 30 per cent of their earnings; most of those with incomes below \$6,000 cannot do so. It is the aged and the young couples with children who feel the pressure most severely. Renters, who constitute about 70 per cent of all households in Boston, generally pay a greater proportion of their incomes on housing than do home owners. And the people who are paying a high proportion of their incomes on housing are more likely than others to be living in small housing units and in places that are in poor repair.



TABLE 3.1

PERCENT OF HOUSING RATED<sup>1</sup> "DETERIORATING" OR "DILAPIDATED" BY RESIDENTIAL AREA

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Roslindale -Jamaica Plain	24
Roxbury -South End	21
Back Bay - Beacon Hill	17
Charlestown - East Boston - South Boston - North End	16
Dorchester -Mattapan	12
North Dorchester	12
Allston-Brighton	10
Hyde Park - West Roxbury	*
TOTAL CITY	14

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1/ As rated by interviewer

\* Less than 0.5%

TABLE 3.2

PROPORTION OF HOUSING IN "SOUND" CONDITION BY RESIDENTIAL AREA IN 1960 AND 1969

<u>Proportion of Housing in Sound Condition</u>	<u>Area in 1960<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Area in 1969<sup>2</sup></u>
Above average	Allston-Brighton	Hyde Park-West Roxbury
	Hyde Park-West Roxbury	
	Dorchester-Mattapan	
	Back Bay-Beacon Hill	
Average	Roslindale-Jamaica Plain	Allston-Brighton
	North Dorchester	North Dorchester
	Charlestown-East Boston- South Boston-North End	Dorchester-Mattapan
		Charlestown-East Boston South Boston-North End
		Back Bay-Beacon Hill
Below average	Roxbury-South End	Roxbury-South End
		Roslindale-Jamaica Plain

1/ U.S. Census

2/ Boston Area Survey, 1969

TABLE 3.3

## MEDIAN NUMBER OF ROOMS BY RESIDENTIAL AREA IN 1960 AND 1969

<u>Residential Area</u>	<u>Median Number of Rooms per Household</u>	
	<u>1960<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>1969<sup>2</sup></u>
Hyde Park-West Roxbury	6.2	5.9
Roslindale-Jamaica Plain	5.8	5.9
Dorchester-Mattapan	5.8	5.8
North Dorchester	5.6	5.8
Roxbury-South End	4.3	5.0
Charlestown-East Boston- South Boston-North End	4.9	4.9
Allston-Brighton	4.7	4.4
Back Bay-Beacon Hill	3.3	2.8
TOTAL CITY	5.1	5.2
BOSTON SMSA <sup>*</sup>	5.2	5.8

1/ U.S. Census; includes occupied and unoccupied housing units.

2/ Boston Area Survey, 1969; includes occupied housing units only.

\* Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area

TABLE 3.4

PERCENT OF HOUSING HAVING MORE THAN ONE PERSON PER ROOM BY RESIDENTIAL  
AREA IN 1960 AND 1969

<u>Residential Area</u>	<u>Percent of Housing Having More than One Person per Room</u>	
	<u>1960</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>1969</u> <sup>2</sup>
Dorchester-Mattapan	6	10
Allston-Brighton	5	10
Charlestown-East Boston- South Boston-North End	11	9
Roxbury-South End	9	9
North Dorchester	9	9
Roslindale-Jamaica Plain	7	5
Hyde Park-West Roxbury	7	5
Back Bay-Beacon Hill	5	3
TOTAL CITY	8	7

1/ U.S. Census

2/ Boston Area Survey, 1969

TABLE 3.5

## MEDIAN GROSS MONTHLY RENT BY RESIDENTIAL AREA IN 1960 AND 1969

<u>Residential Area</u>	<u>Median Gross Monthly Rent</u>		<u>Percent Increase</u>
	<u>1960</u> <sup>1</sup>	<u>1969</u> <sup>2</sup>	
Hyde Park-West Roxbury	\$93	\$174	87
Allston-Brighton	\$87	\$143	64
Dorchester-Mattapan-Jamaica Plain-Roslindale	\$90	\$141	57
Back Bay-Beacon Hill	\$84	\$127	51
Roxbury-South	\$63	\$124	97
North Dorchester	\$82	\$119	45
Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston-North End	\$62	\$103	66
TOTAL CITY	\$78	\$130	67
BOSTON SMSA*	\$87	\$130	50

1/ U.S. Census

2/ Boston Area Survey, 1969

\* Cost-of-living, cost-of-housing, and cost-of-rent indexes in Boston SMSA increased by 27% during this period. (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

TABLE 3.6

## HOUSING COST AS A PERCENT OF INCOME BY TOTAL FAMILY INCOME

Housing Cost as Percent of Income	Total Family Income					TOTAL CITY
	Less than \$3000	\$3000 to \$5999	\$6000 to \$9999	\$10,000 to \$14,999	\$15,000 or more	
Less than 20%	1%	19%	48%	76%	98%	42%
20% to 29%	6	31	33	23	2	24
30% or more	<u>93</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>34</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(74)	(129)	(150)	(76)	(40)	(469)

\* Less than 0.5%

TABLE 3.7

## HOUSING COST AS A PERCENT OF INCOME BY STAGE IN LIFE CYCLE

Housing Cost as Percent of Income	Stage in Life Cycle					
	Under 40, unmarried, no children	40 to 64, unmarried, no children	Under 65, married, no children	Under 40, minor children	40 to 64, minor children	65 or older
Less than 20%	41%	35%	68%	29%	47%	29%
20% to 29%	34	24	20	26	26	15
30% or more	<u>25</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>56</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(68)	(51)	(65)	(91)	(106)	(89)

TABLE 3.8

## HOUSING COST AS A PERCENT OF INCOME BY NUMBER OF PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD

<u>Housing Cost as Percent of Income</u>	<u>Number of Persons in Household</u>			
	<u>One</u>	<u>Two</u>	<u>Three or Four</u>	<u>Five or more</u>
Less than 20%	32%	53%	39%	45%
20% to 29%	22	20	27	24
30% or more	<u>46</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>31</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(140)	(121)	(118)	(94)

TABLE 3.9

## HOUSING COST AS A PERCENT OF INCOME BY RACE

<u>Housing Cost as Percent of Income</u>	<u>Race</u>	
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White</u>
Less than 20%	36%	43%
20% to 29%	26	23
30% or more	<u>38</u>	<u>34</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%
(N)	(84)	(383)

TABLE 3.10

## HOUSING COST AS A PERCENT OF INCOME BY RESIDENTIAL AREA

Housing Cost as Percent of Income	Residential Area							Total City
	Allston- Brighton	Back Bay- Beacon Hill	Charlestown- East Boston- South Boston- North End	Dorchester- Mattapan	Jamaica Plain- Roslindale	Hyde Park- West Roxbury	North Dorchester	Roxbury- South End
Less than 20%	37%	39%	42%	47%	39%	54%	36%	41%
20% to 29%	20	30	23	25	24	23	21	24
30% or more	43	31	35	28	37	23	43	35
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(56)	(59)	(71)	(40)	(51)	(61)	(70)	(475)



TABLE 3.11

## HOUSING COST AS A PERCENT OF INCOME BY HOME TENURE

<u>Housing Cost as Percent of Income</u>	<u>Home Tenure</u>	
	<u>Owns</u>	<u>Rents</u>
Less than 20%	51%	38%
20% to 29%	19	25
30% or more	30	37
TOTAL	100%	100%
(N)	(117)	(358)

TABLE 3.12

## HOUSING COST AS A PERCENT OF INCOME BY NUMBER OF ROOMS IN HOUSING UNIT

<u>Housing Cost as Percent of Income</u>	<u>Number of Rooms</u>			
	<u>1 or 2</u>	<u>3 or 4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6 or more</u>
Less than 20%	31%	42%	44%	42%
20% to 29%	30	22	22	24
30% or more	39	36	34	34
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(51)	(172)	(122)	(130)

TABLE 3.13

## MONTHLY RENT BY NUMBER OF ROOMS IN HOUSING UNIT

<u>Monthly Rent</u>	<u>Number of Rooms</u>			
	<u>1 or 2</u>	<u>3 or 4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6 or more</u>
Less than \$80	19%	27%	9%	12%
\$80 - \$119	25	29	26	20
\$120 - \$159	45	29	44	47
\$160 or more	11	15	21	21
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(53)	(177)	(98)	(51)

TABLE 3.14

PERCENT OF INCOME SPENT ON HOUSING BY CONDITION OF HOUSING<sup>1</sup>

<u>Housing Cost as Percent of Income</u>	<u>Condition of Housing</u>	
	<u>Excellent or sound</u>	<u>Deteriorating or dilapidated</u>
Less than 20%	43%	34%
20% to 29%	24	22
30% or more	33	44
TOTAL	100%	100%
(N)	(393)	(68)

1/ As rated by interviewer

TABLE 3.15

## CONDITION OF HOUSING BY GROSS MONTHLY RENT

Condition of Housing	Gross Monthly Rent			
	Less than \$80	\$80-\$119	\$120-\$159	\$160 or more
Excellent	11%	10%	15%	42%
Sound	65	68	72	45
Deteriorating & Dilapidated	24	22	13	13
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(71)	(96)	(134)	(67)

## SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING

We have looked at some of the characteristics of the housing situation. Now we shall go on to consider what the people of Boston think about their housing. One would expect, for example, that people would be considerably less satisfied with their housing when it is deteriorating or dilapidated. This is generally true, yet it is interesting and important to note that over a third of the people we found living in such housing said that they were "very satisfied" with it (Table 4.1). Satisfaction with housing, therefore, cannot be measured solely by the objective features of the situation.

This realization is reinforced by a second finding. People who live in overcrowded conditions (overcrowding occurs when there are more members of the household than the number of rooms) are no less satisfied with their accommodations than those who live in uncrowded conditions (Table 4.2). It is true, however, that people are considerably more satisfied when they have five rooms or more to their housing unit (Table 4.3). This may be significant. It suggests, for one thing, that there are certain minimum space needs for households irrespective of the number of individuals involved. Second, it offers pause for thought since current attempts to relieve the housing shortage concentrate mostly on providing housing units with less than five rooms. Our finding suggests that such small units may not be the optimal solution for many people.

We have considered another area of likely dissatisfaction. This has to do with the cost of housing. It gives some very interesting results, some of which, again, were not as we expected. First of all, most people are content with their housing. Even of those who pay 50% or more of their income on housing, over 70% are "very satisfied" or "fairly satisfied" with what they have gotten (Table 4.4). This does not mean, however, that they are satisfied with the cost of the housing. Rather this factor is considered separately so that, while only roughly 20% of the people who pay less than 20% of their income on housing think they are paying too much, over 50% of those who pay 50% or more think they are paying too much (Table 4.5). In fact, whether or not a person thinks he is paying too much for rent is an excellent predictor of his degree of satisfaction with his housing. Thus, fully 80% of those who were "very satisfied" with their housing thought their rent was about right, but 71% of the people who were not very satisfied thought they were paying too much (Table 4.6).

An interesting finding comes from comparing tables 4.5 and 4.8. We see that those paying higher rents are slightly more likely to say they are paying too much for housing; but the much better predictor is the proportion of one's income that is spent on housing. People who spend a reasonable amount of their income on housing (less than 20 per cent) are very likely to say their housing costs are reasonable. Those who spend an unreasonable part of their income on housing (more than 30 per cent) are

much more likely to say they are paying too much for what they are getting.

It appears, then, that most people obtain housing which is reasonably satisfactory to them, even if they have to pay more than they really can afford. People who do not like their housing almost always think they are paying too much. People who think costs are too high, however, are not necessarily unhappy about their housing; cost is only one factor in satisfaction. The clear fact, though, is that higher incomes increase options and greatly increase the likelihood of housing satisfaction. Those with incomes under \$6,000 per year are much less satisfied with their housing than those whose incomes are higher (Table 4.9). As we saw in chapter 3, people with incomes under \$6,000 are likely to be paying an excessive proportion of their income on rent.

It is interesting now to consider other areas in which we find differences. Home owners, for example, are much more satisfied with their housing than are renters, as one might expect (Table 4.10). It is less predictable that they are also just slightly more likely than renters to think they are paying too much for housing (Table 4.11). Older people are considerably more satisfied with their housing than are the young: the most satisfied are those from households where the head is over 65; the least satisfied are the unmarried under 40 who are without children (Table 4.12). Apart from this latter group, there appears to be a slight

tendency for couples with young children in the city of Boston to be less satisfied with their housing than those who have no children at all.

Negroes are considerably less satisfied with their housing than are whites (Table 4.13). This in part may be because Negroes tend to be renters rather than owners and are more likely than average to be in families with young children--and both these factors would be likely to reinforce the trend toward dissatisfaction.

Attitudes on housing do not differ appreciably, we found, from one part of the city to another. Only two areas stand out as being different from the rest (Table 4.14): Dorchester-Mattapan and Hyde Park-West Roxbury. In these two the level of satisfaction was considerably higher than in the rest of the city. Both these areas contain a higher than average proportion of home owners. In general, satisfaction is slightly lower in the areas which contain primarily rental properties.

### Summary

We have tried to discover the factors that are associated with people's satisfaction with their housing. Most prominent among these are home ownership and the actual size of the housing unit. Overcrowding as such is not significant, but the condition of the housing is to a considerable degree. The proportion of their incomes that people pay on rent is also not significant until this reaches the level of 50 per cent.

Then it becomes definitely important. The higher rent people pay, in general, the more satisfied they are with their housing. However, more important than either of these objective measures of cost is the person's subjective sense as to whether the cost of his housing is appropriate or is too much for what he is getting.

Negroes, young single individuals, and people with low incomes generally tend to be less satisfied with their housing. However, one of the most interesting findings is that the aged, who have low incomes and pay a relatively higher amount for housing, are the most satisfied group of all.



TABLE 4.1

## SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING BY CONDITION OF HOUSING

<u>Satisfaction with Housing</u>	<u>Condition of Housing<sup>1/</sup></u>	
	<u>Deteriorating or dilapidated</u>	<u>Sound or excellent</u>
Very satisfied	36%	59%
Fairly satisfied	34	33
Not very satisfied	30	8
TOTAL	100%	100/
(N)	(72)	(459)

<sup>1/</sup> Interviewer rating

TABLE 4.2

## SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING BY NUMBER OF PEOPLE PER ROOM

<u>Satisfaction with Housing</u>	<u>Number of People per Room</u>	
	<u>One person or less</u>	<u>1.01 people or more</u>
Very satisfied	56%	53%
Fairly satisfied	34	35
Not very satisfied	10	12
TOTAL	100%	100%
(N)	(507)	(39)

TABLE 4.3

## SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING BY NUMBER OF ROOMS IN HOUSING UNIT

<u>Satisfaction with Housing</u>	<u>Number of Rooms</u>			
	<u>1 or 2</u>	<u>3 or 4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6 or more</u>
Ver satisfied	48%	44%	58%	64%
Fairly satisfied	37	41	35	28
Not very satisfied	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(57)	(186)	(140)	(164)

TABLE 4.4

## SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING BY COST OF HOUSING AS A PERCENT OF INCOME

<u>Satisfaction with Housing</u>	<u>Cost of Housing as a Percent of Income</u>			
	<u>Less than 20%</u>	<u>20%-29%</u>	<u>30%-49%</u>	<u>50% or more</u>
Very satisfied	58%	57%	51%	43%
Fairly satisfied	34	33	38	28
Not very satisfied	<u>8</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>29</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(196)	(111)	(124)	(40)

TABLE 4.5

## RATING OF COST OF HOUSING BY PERCENT OF INCOME SPENT ON HOUSING

Rating of Cost of Housing	Percent of Income Spent on Housing			
	Less than 20%	20%-29%	30%-49%	50% or more
Too much	19%	29%	39%	51%
About right	<u>81</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>49</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(195)	(110)	(125)	(37)

TABLE 4.6

## RATING OF COST OF HOUSING BY SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING

Rating of Cost of Housing	Satisfaction with Housing		
	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Not very Satisfied
Too much	20%	35%	71%
About right	<u>80</u>	<u>65</u>	<u>29</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(283)	(181)	(59)

TABLE 4.7

## SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING BY GROSS MONTHLY RENT

<u>Satisfaction with Housing</u>	<u>Gross Monthly Rent</u>			
	<u>Less than \$80</u>	<u>\$80-\$119</u>	<u>\$120-\$159</u>	<u>\$160 or more</u>
Very satisfied	43%	44%	52%	52%
Fairly satisfied	46	37	37	36
Not very satisfied	11	19	11	12
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(70)	(100)	(139)	(63)

TABLE 4.8

## RATING OF COST OF HOUSING BY GROSS MONTHLY RENT

<u>Rating of Cost of Housing</u>	<u>Gross Monthly Rent</u>			
	<u>Less than \$80</u>	<u>\$80-\$119</u>	<u>\$120-\$159</u>	<u>\$160 or more</u>
Too much	24%	26%	31%	38%
About right	76	74	69	62
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(70)	(100)	(139)	(63)

TABLE 4.9

## SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING BY TOTAL FAMILY INCOME

<u>Satisfaction with Housing</u>	<u>Total Family Income</u>				
	<u>Less than \$3,000</u>	<u>\$3,000 - 5,999</u>	<u>\$6,000 - 9,999</u>	<u>\$10,000 - 14,999</u>	<u>\$15,000 or more</u>
Very satisfied	40%	47%	59%	63%	67%
Fairly satisfied	42	37	33	31	29
Not very satisfied	18	16	8	6	4
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(76)	(132)	(159)	(78)	(42)

TABLE 4.10

## SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING BY HOME TENURE

<u>Satisfaction with Housing</u>	<u>Home Tenure</u>	
	<u>Owns</u>	<u>Rents</u>
Very satisfied	71%	48%
Fairly satisfied	25	39
Not very satisfied	4	13
TOTAL	100%	100%
(N)	(152)	(386)

TABLE 4.11

## RATING OF COST OF HOUSING BY HOME TENURE

<u>Rating of Cost of Housing</u>	<u>Home Tenure</u>	
	<u>Owns</u>	<u>Rents</u>
Too much	35%	30%
About right	65	70
TOTAL	100%	100%
(N)	(147)	(379)

TABLE 4.12

## SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING BY STAGE IN LIFE CYCLE

<u>Satisfaction with Housing</u>	<u>Stage in Life Cycle</u>					
	<u>Under 40, unmarried, no children</u>	<u>40-64, unmarried, no children</u>	<u>Under 65, married, no children</u>	<u>Under 40, minor children</u>	<u>40-64, minor children</u>	<u>65 or older</u>
Very satisfied	32%	63%	61%	52%	58%	68%
Fairly satisfied	52	24	30	37	34	24
Not very satisfied	16	13	9	11	8	8
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(81)	(63)	(71)	(100)	(121)	(105)

TABLE 4.13

## SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING BY RACE

<u>Satisfaction with Housing</u>	<u>Race</u>	
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White</u>
Very satisfied	44%	59%
Fairly satisfied	37	33
Not very satisfied	19	8
TOTAL	100%	100%
(N)	(92)	(447)

TABLE 4.14  
SATISFACTION WITH HOUSING BY RESIDENTIAL AREA

	Residential Area								
	Allston- Brighton	Back Bay- Beacon Hill	Charlestown- East Boston- South Boston- North End	Dorchester- Mattapan	Jamaica Plain- Roslindale	Hyde Park- West Roxbury	North Dorchester	Roxbury- South End	Tot Cit
Satisfaction with Housing									
Very satisfied	45%	44%	52%	66%	59%	73%	54%	47%	56
Fairly satisfied	42	41	33	25	36	26	37	35	34
Not very satisfied	13	15	15	9	5	1	9	18	10
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100
(N)	(64)	(72)	(80)	(48)	(59)	(72)	(80)	(73)	(548)



ETHNIC GROUPS IN BOSTON

"Candidate A is going after the Irish vote." "Issue B is critical to the Negroes." Such statements are common. There is a real question about how much people with a common nationality background, a common religion, or a common skin color do in fact constitute a group, in the sense that they share the same attitudes, the same way of life. In a city such as Boston there seem to be strong and readily apparent signs of various heritages, however, and it is interesting to find out something about these different groups. In this chapter we shall provide a brief description of the larger ethnic groups in the city.

It is important to realize that we are only describing those members of a given group who happen to live within the city of Boston. These descriptions probably do not apply to all members of a group in the wider metropolitan area, where living conditions and income levels may be different.

There are five main groups to be considered: Irish Catholics, Italian Catholics, Negroes, Jews, and white Protestants. We include among the Irish and Italian Catholics people whose families came originally either from Ireland or from Italy and who presently are Catholics. We also include those who say they think of themselves as Irish or Italian even if only one side of the family is Irish or Italian.

The Irish form the largest identifiable group; yet, contrary to common belief, they constitute only about 22 per cent of the population of Boston (Table 5.1). The Italians are a considerably smaller group, constituting only about 11 per cent of the population.

Negroes share a skin color, more or less, and share a common set of experiences in this country, again more or less. They are the second largest identifiable group, after the Irish, and make up 18 per cent of the Boston population. Puerto Ricans and other Spanish-speaking people have been excluded from our discussion because their numbers are relatively few.

White Protestants are the least likely, among the groups we are discussing, to think of themselves as belonging together. Yet they share a religion and, in general, their families come originally from the Western and Northern European countries. We did not restrict this group simply to the old "Yankee" families, but included all whites who are presently Protestants. Using this definition, 13 per cent of the Boston population is white Protestant.

The Jews do not share a common national background, but they do share a religion and a history. They represent the smallest group we shall discuss, constituting about six per cent of the population.

These five groups together account for about 70 per cent of the population of the city of Boston. No other group individually accounts for as much as five per cent. Among the clearly identifiable, but small, groups are the Puerto Ricans, the French-Canadians, the Greeks,

and the Eastern European Catholics. Together these various smaller groups make up about 18 per cent of the population. The remaining 12 per cent could not be classified by nationality or other distinctive ethnic characteristic. For the most part, these people are Catholics with mixed national backgrounds.

### The Irish and Italians

The Irish are spread throughout the city of Boston. They compose significant groups in all the neighborhoods, with the exception of Roxbury and Back Bay (Table 5.2). The Italians, on the other hand, are more concentrated. The Italians, of course, are prevalent in the North End and East Boston, as the Irish are prevalent in Charlestown and South Boston; but, outside these "Italian neighborhoods," most seem to live in the southwest parts of Boston: Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, Roslindale, West Roxbury. There are relatively few Italians in the rest of the city.

There is one very interesting similarity between the two groups: we discovered that almost all Irish and Italian adults were born either within the Boston metropolitan area or in a foreign country (Table 5.3). A somewhat higher proportion of the Italians were born in Italy (28 per cent) than Irish were born in Ireland (19 per cent). However, most of the rest of both groups were born in and around Boston. Only about 10 per cent of either group came to Boston from elsewhere in the United States.

We also found that about 80 per cent of the adults in both groups have lived in the Boston area for more than 20 years (Table 5.4). This finding is consistent with another on the age and family situation of people in these groups. The Irish include a relatively large number of aged, people over age 65, and a number of middle-aged families -- families with children in which the husband is over forty (Table 5.6). The Italians, similarly, include a relatively high proportion of middle-aged families with children. Both groups have relatively few young, unmarried adults. A distinctly higher than average proportion of Italian adults are married, but in many of those marriages there are no children. A somewhat higher than average number of the Irish are widowed (Table 5.7).

Among the Irish and most strikingly among the Italians, fewer than average feel it likely that they will move within the next two years (Table 5.10). If they were to move, however, over two-thirds of both groups would want to stay within the same neighborhood or move to the suburbs, rather than live in another part of the city (Table 5.11).

In the economic sphere, the Irish and Italians again share similarities. Both groups have a higher than average proportion of families with incomes under \$3,000, which typically reflects retirement. Overall, however, they are both doing somewhat better than average financially. The Italians are doing particularly well: over 40 per cent of the Italian families and almost 30 per cent of Irish families made more than \$10,000 in 1968, compared with a city average of 25 per cent. And this has been

achieved despite the fact that they are no better educated than average (Table 5.9). The Irish include a large number of high school graduates, but slightly fewer than the average number have been to college. Half of the adult Italians have not finished high school, a proportion that is considerably above the average for the city. It must be remembered, moreover, in considering income and education levels, that the members of these two groups tend to be older than other groups in the community and many are immigrants. Older people and immigrants, on the average, have had less formal education. And retirement incomes, which are particularly common among the Irish, tend to lower the average income for this group.

With regard to occupations, the Italians and the Irish have about the city average of one-fifth to one-fourth in professional and managerial positions (Table 5.12). These two ethnic groups are also similar in having more than the average number of skilled craftsmen and slightly more clerical workers. They differ in that the Irish have only half the city average in operative positions, and the Italians have somewhat fewer employed in service occupations.

### Negroes

Perhaps the two most distinctive characteristics of the Negro population are its geographic and age distributions. Over 80 per cent of all Negroes in the city live in the South End, Roxbury, or North Dorchester areas (Table 5.2). It seems that they are slightly less concentrated in these

areas than in 1965, when the proportion was perhaps as high as 90 per cent,<sup>1/</sup> but the basic concentration of Negroes in these areas remains a clear fact.

The second distinctive feature is that Negroes constitute a particularly large portion of the young families in the city -- those under 40 who have children. Over half the Negro adults in the city are under 40 years old and there are relatively few Negroes 65 or older (Table 5.5).

In Chapter 1, we noted that the Negroes have remained a more or less stable percentage of the population of Boston since 1965. The considerable growth of the Negro population during the years from 1960 to 1965 has not apparently continued. This suggests that Negroes have been moving in and out of the city at about the same rate as other ethnic groups during the last few years. The data in this section tend to confirm this view. For example, the proportion of Negroes who say they have moved to the Boston area in the past five years is just about the same as for all other groups (Table 5.4). Moreover, consistent with our theory, a particularly large proportion of Negroes have been in Boston five to 20 years. It is interesting to note that while only about a fifth of the Negro adults were born in Boston, as many as 40 per cent lived here for over 20 years.

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<sup>1/</sup> "Black and White in Boston," United Community Services, Boston: 1968 (mimeo).



Negroes do not differ markedly from the city as a whole in their desire to move out of their present accommodations (Table 5.10), or in the wish to get out of the city (Table 5.11). But with the Jews, they are the least likely to express a desire to remain in the same neighborhood. The evidence points to increased dispersion of Negroes, assuming that suitable housing is available elsewhere in the city and the greater Boston area, but growth of the Negro population at only about the same rate as for other ethnic groups.

Negro adults have had less formal education than average in Boston. Only about 14 per cent have been to college. Many more than average have not completed high school. The education picture for Negroes is quite comparable to that for Italians. In contrast to the Italians, the income levels for Negroes are also low. The dearth of aged among Negroes keeps the percentage with incomes under \$3,000 at a low level. However, there are considerably more Negroes, proportionately, living on earnings below \$10,000 than is true among other groups, and there are very few earning over \$15,000. It is not surprising, therefore, to find only ten per cent of Negroes in professional and managerial occupations, and over half employed in operative and service positions (Table 5.12).

#### Jews and White Protestants

The histories of Jews and white Protestants in this country are very different, yet members of these two groups who live in the city of

Boston are surprisingly similar, and they differ from the other groups in many of the same ways.

First, there are few Jewish or white Protestant families with children in the city. A markedly high proportion of both groups consist of unmarried people under 40. The Jews, however, have the highest percentage of any group (23%) of married couples without children (Table 5.6). It is perhaps interesting to note that the Jews have a lower than average number of widowed, and a higher than average number of divorced or separated members, within their group. White Protestants are average in both these respects, but have fewer married people and more unmarried people than do the Jews (Table 5.7).

Second, neither Jewish nor white Protestant adults are likely to be native Bostonians. Although almost 50 per cent of adults of all groups living in Boston were born in the Boston area, this is true for only a third of the Jews and white Protestants. Forty per cent and more of each group has come to Boston from another part of the United States. It is consistent also to find that the length of time they have lived in the Boston area is considerably less than average (Table 5.4).

There is one characteristic in which Jews and white Protestants differ quite considerably, however. This is in their distribution within the city. The Jews are strongly concentrated in Dorchester-Mattapan, and are otherwise found in reasonable numbers only in Allston-Brighton and in Back Bay-Beacon Hill. The white Protestants by contrast are



distributed rather evenly throughout the city, with the exception of Roxbury-South End and Dorchester-Mattapan, where their numbers are very few. Over half of both groups think it is likely they will move within the next two years. But they differ in that more Jews (43%) think of moving only to the suburbs, while white Protestants (40%) are most likely to think they will move within their same neighborhood (Table 5.11).

The education and income figures for these groups are also interesting. About 60 per cent of adult Jews, and almost 50 per cent of the white Protestants, have attended college. The average for all adults in the city is about 30 per cent. However, this markedly higher level of education does not produce markedly higher incomes. The family incomes of both Jews and white Protestants, while distributed somewhat differently, are only about the city average.

### Conclusion

In this section, we have attempted to describe some of the salient features of the five largest identifiable ethnic groups in the community. We can summarize the data for each group, as follows:

The Irish, the largest group, with 22 per cent of the population, are spread throughout the city; they are generally somewhat older than average, educationally about average, financially slightly above average, and have about the city average holding professional and managerial jobs. Over 70 per cent were born in the Boston area.

The Italians, about 11 per cent of the population, are somewhat more concentrated in specific neighborhoods than the Irish. They have less formal education than average, but are financially better off and also have about the average proportion holding professional and managerial positions. They include more than an average number of both young and middle-aged families with children. Over 60 per cent were born in the Boston area.

Negroes, about 18 per cent of the population, are concentrated in the central areas of the city - almost half live in Roxbury or the South End. Negroes include a relatively large number of young families with children. Their income and formal education levels are below average; over half their jobs are of the operative or service type. Under 20 per cent are native Bostonians, yet 40 per cent are long-time residents of the city.

The Jews, about six per cent of the population, include a lot of young unmarried adults; over a third are age 30 or under. Educationally very high, financially about average, they are concentrated in Brighton, Back Bay and Dorchester-Mattapan. Only a third are native Bostonians.

White Protestants, about 13 per cent of the population, differ from the overall averages for the population in much the same directions as the Jews, except they are spread more generally throughout the city.

TABLE 5.1

## POPULATION BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Ethnic Group</u>	<u>Percent of Population</u>
Irish Catholic	22%
Black	18
White Protestant	13
Italian Catholic	11
Jewish	6
Other specific nationality	18
Mixed - no specific nationality	<u>12</u>
TOTAL	100%
(N)	(552)

TABLE 5.2

## RESIDENTIAL AREA BY ETHNIC GROUP

Residential Area	Ethnic Group					Total City
	Black	White Protestant	Jewish	Italian Catholic	Irish Catholic	
Allston-Brighton	3%	12%	27%	6%	8%	9%
Back Bay-Beacon Hill	1	14	17	1	3	7
Charlestown- East Boston- South Boston- North End	1	12	*	27	16	14
Dorchester-Mattapan	14	5	42	5	13	11
Hyde Park-West Roxbury	*	19	7	25	22	15
Jamaica Plain- Roslindale	*	22	4	26	14	15
North Dorchester	34	10	*	10	21	18
Roxbury-South End	47	6	3	*	3	11
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(93)	(79)	(47)	(61)	(123)	(542)

\* Less than 0.5%

TABLE 5.3

## PLACE OF BIRTH BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Place of Birth</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>					<u>Total City</u>
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	
Boston SMSA **	19%	33%	35%	61%	71%	48%
South U.S.	50	2	*	*	*	9
Other U.S.	15	40	47	11	10	22
Foreign	<u>16</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>21</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(93)	(79)	(47)	(61)	(123)	(541)

\* Less than 0.5%

\*\* Boston Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (the metropolitan area used for U.S. Census studies).

TABLE 5.4

## NUMBER OF YEARS IN BOSTON AREA BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Number of Years in Boston Area</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>					<u>Total City</u>
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	
Less than 5	25%	29%	24%	10%	7%	19%
6 to 20	35	23	26	12	11	21
21 to 40	27	29	24	27	30	28
More than 40	<u>13</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>32</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(93)	(79)	(47)	(61)	(123)	(552)

TABLE 5.5

## AGE OF ADULTS BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Age</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>					<u>Total City</u>
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	
Less than 31	30%	28%	37%	19%	21%	28%
31 to 40	24	18	8	15	9	15
41 to 50	19	8	9	17	20	18
51 to 60	12	17	22	24	18	15
61 to 70	11	16	17	12	17	15
Over 70	<u>4</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>9</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(93)	(78)	(46)	(59)	(122)	(544)

TABLE 5.6

## STAGE IN LIFE CYCLE OF FAMILY HEAD BY ETHNIC GROUP

Stage in Life Cycle of Head	Ethnic Group					Total City
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	
Under 40, unmarried, no children	14%	22%	21%	5%	8%	15%
40 to 64, unmarried, no children	13	13	17	9	13	12
Under 65, married, no children	12	11	23	20	8	13
Under 40, minor children	31	18	11	15	14	18
40 to 64, minor children	19	13	9	29	27	22
Over 65	<u>11</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>20</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(92)	(78)	(47)	(59)	(122)	(535)

# MARITAL STATUS BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Marital Status</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>					<u>Total City</u>
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	
Married	51%	50%	64%	67%	58%	56%
Never married	20	33	20	18	24	26
Widowed	13	12	5	11	15	11
Separated, Divorced	16	5	11	4	3	7
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(93)	(79)	(47)	(61)	(123)	(542)

TABLE 5.8

# TOTAL FAMILY INCOME BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Total Family Income</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>					<u>Total City</u>
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	
Less than \$3,000	12%	11%	19%	21%	20%	16%
\$3,000-\$5,999	34	31	34	12	20	26
\$6,000-\$9,999	39	38	21	25	32	33
\$10,000-\$14,999	11	16	21	25	17	16
\$15,000 or more	4	4	5	17	11	9
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(84)	(71)	(38)	(52)	(114)	(482)

\* Includes one-person families.



TABLE 5.9

## EDUCATION OF ADULTS BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Education</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>					
	<u>Black</u>	<u>Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	<u>Total City</u>
8 years or less	31%	18%	11%	29%	15%	20%
Some high school	23	11	9	21	15	17
High school graduate	32	23	19	35	47	33
Some college	12	22	21	11	14	18
College graduate or higher degree	<u>2</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>12</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(93)	(78)	(47)	(59)	(122)	(535)

TABLE 5.10

## LIKELIHOOD OF HOUSEHOLDS MOVING WITHIN TWO YEARS BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Likelihood of Moving</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>					<u>Total City</u>
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	
Very likely	34%	42%	40%	17%	30%	33%
Fairly likely	16	12	22	17	13	16
Not very likely	39	28	29	32	36	34
No chance at all	11	18	9	34	21	17
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(93)	(78)	(45)	(59)	(121)	(544)

Table 5.11

WHERE WOULD LOOK FOR HOUSING IN BOSTON AREA (IF HAD TO MOVE) BY ETHNIC GROUP

Where Look for Housing	Ethnic Group					Total City
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	
Only within present neighborhood	28%	40%	28%	41%	42%	36%
Dorchester, Mattapan, Jamaica Plain, or Roslindale	11	1	*	2	1	3
Other part of Boston	6	4	8	7	7	7
Boston and suburbs	10	18	4	6	9	11
Suburbs	27	18	43	31	26	26
Don't know	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>17</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(93)	(79)	(47)	(61)	(123)	(542)

\* Less than 0.5%

TABLE 5.12

## OCCUPATION OF ALL EMPLOYED MALES BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Occupation</u> *	<u>Ethnic Group</u>					<u>Total</u> <u>City</u>
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White</u> <u>Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian</u> <u>Catholic</u>	<u>Irish</u> <u>Catholic</u>	
Professional	8%	21%	—	15%	14%	14%
Managerial	2	10	—	8	10	9
Clerical	8	5	—	13	16	10
Sales	3	7	—	4	4	5
Skilled	25	24	—	29	30	24
Operative	33	24	—	17	10	20
Service	19	7	—	8	14	14
Labor	2	2	—	6	2	4
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(63)	(42)	(25)	(48)	(80)	(372)

\* Occupation breakdown is that used by U.S. Census Bureau.

— Too few cases to be meaningful.

## CITY SERVICES AND CITY GOVERNMENT

There is constant debate about the quality of the city services offered in Boston, and it is, therefore, both interesting and useful to find out how people at large -- and not just the vocal minority -- rate city services. We chose four major service areas: (1) the education that children receive in the schools, (2) parks and playgrounds, (3) police, and (4) trash and garbage collection. For each one we asked our sample of the population to rate the provision of service as "very good," "good," "fair," or "poor." We also asked them to rate in the same manner how good a job they think the city government is doing.

For the total city population, fully 80 per cent rated trash and garbage collection "very good" or "good" (Table 6.2), 57 per cent gave these ratings to the police (Table 6.3) and 55 per cent to the schools (Table 6.4) while parks and playgrounds fell at the bottom with 35 per cent (Table 6.1). The differences between these ratings were substantial. Yet it is also interesting to note that over half the population gave a "good" or better rating to each of the services, with the exception of parks and playgrounds. In view of that, it may be somewhat surprising that only 30 per cent of the population of Boston approves of the job that the city government is doing (Table 6.5).

### Differences Among Groups

These findings were analyzed in greater depth, with various ethnic groups used as the focal point. The ratings for some services varied greatly from one group to another: for other services, the ratings were very similar. For example, all the groups rated the parks and playgrounds about the same (Table 6.1). Most groups were in agreement about trash and garbage collection; Negroes, however, were considerably more critical (Table 6.2). Wider differences appear in the ratings of police services (Table 6.3). The Irish rated them high: 69 per cent of the Irish thought police services were "good" or "very good." As for the Italians and the white Protestants, about 60 per cent, or the same proportion as for the whole city, gave police "good" or "very good" ratings, but the Jews and particularly the Negroes rated police services much lower: only 46 per cent of the Jews, and 33 per cent of the Negroes thought the police were "good" or "very good."

It was with respect to schools, however, that there was most difference. Over 80 per cent of the Italians rated the schools as "good" or "very good," and so did almost 70 per cent of the Irish (Table 6.4). However, less than half of the white Protestants gave these ratings, and less than a third of the Jews and Negroes did so.

With regard to the overall job that the city government is doing (Table 6.5) there is relatively little difference among the groups, not nearly as much difference as in the ratings of police and schools. What is significant is that all the ratings are considerably lower than those offered for any one specific service.

### Differences in Standards

There are several questions that emerge from these findings. First, what is behind the divergence in the evaluation of the schools and police? Is it that some groups have very different experiences with these services than others do? Do the Italians, for example, go to schools that are much better than those the Negroes attend? Or is it that the groups apply different standards in making their evaluations? If different groups receive unequal treatment, then there is clearly need for reform. But if various segments in the city apply markedly different standards, then the solution is not so easy.

We have found evidence that, indeed, at least part of the difference may be explained by differences in standards. The greatest divergence of opinion occurs over the evaluation of the school system. Omitting Negroes from the analysis for the moment, we may consider how a person's background affects his rating of the schools (Table 6.6). We found that high-school graduates made about the same evaluation as those who did not graduate from high school. However, those who had attended college rated Boston schools lower than those who had not gone to college. A more dramatic difference appears when we consider where people were born (Table 6.7). Native Bostonians were very much more positive about the schools than those who were born elsewhere in the United States. (The foreign born fell between these two groups, but somewhat closer to the ratings of the native Bostonian.) This same

relationship also occurs in the ratings of police services and trash collection, but not in the ratings of parks and playgrounds. We might speculate as to whether native Bostonians are more favorable toward their schools because they lack exposure to other school systems or because they express community loyalty and, in many cases, presumably, loyalty to the schools they actually attended. But whatever the cause, these factors suggest that part of the disagreement about the quality of the schools and other services reflects different perspectives for evaluating them.

The fact that college-educated people are somewhat more critical of Boston schools does not help to explain why Negroes are more critical than other groups. The fact that the majority of Negro adults are not native Bostonians may be relevant. There is, however, no indication from our very small sample of Negroes born in Boston that they are more positive than the Negroes born elsewhere. Since the Negroes are concentrated in a few areas of the city, one obvious alternative explanation is that services of all kinds, particularly schools, are worse in those areas.

#### Rating of Services by Area of the City

In Table 6.8, the areas are ordered by the percentage of their residents who rated each of the four services as either "good" or "very good." One finding stands out: on all four services, the ratings from the residents of Roxbury-South End came close to the bottom. North Dorchester also tended to be below average. At the other extreme, Hyde Park-West Roxbury



ratings were above average on all services, and ratings for Jamaica Plain-Roslindale and Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston-North End were above average on three out of the four services.

These patterns are difficult to unravel. The Italians, particularly, tend to rate schools and trash collection service high and they also tend to live in the areas where these services are rated highest. The Irish are also positive toward these services, but while they too live in these same areas, they are also prominent in North Dorchester and in Dorchester-Mattapan where service ratings by all area residents are average or lower. This appears to support the notion that having different standards plays a role in making evaluations.

The Negroes, who rate services lowest, are concentrated in the areas which, as a whole, rate services lowest. In order to find out whether this is because Negroes are more demanding of services or because they live in areas which receive worse services, we have compared Negroes living in Roxbury-South End and in North Dorchester with whites living in those areas. We have found that Negroes rate the schools considerably lower than do whites. At the same time, whites there rate them lower than do whites in the rest of the city (Table 6.9). Of course, even though we have controlled for area, it is still not necessarily the case that Negro and white families are talking about the same schools. Our data just do not permit us to compare exactly how Negroes and whites would rate the same school. For these areas, however, we might infer both that the schools are inferior to those in the rest of the city and that the two groups want something different from the schools.

### Who Is the Government Concerned About

We have already noted that all ethnic groups rated the overall job of the city government rather unfavorably, lower than they rated any one service. The groups differed little from each other on this issue. Most striking was the lack of difference between the Irish and Italians, who tend to be positive about Boston services, and the Negroes, who tend to be very critical. In this report, we shall not attempt a complete explanation of this finding. However, we know that city governments, in addition to providing services, need to convince people that they are trying to help them, even if they cannot succeed perfectly. In this light, the responses to two questions we asked may be relevant.

We asked people which ethnic groups they thought the city government was most concerned about helping and which it was least concerned about helping. Here we uncovered some striking differences (Tables 6.10 and 6.11). Apparently two-thirds of both the Irish and the Italians felt that the Boston city government was most concerned about helping Negroes, while most of the remaining third said there was no single favored group. Yet only 20 per cent of the Negroes said they thought that the city government was most concerned about helping them. Consistently, less than 5 per cent of either the Irish or the Italians thought the city was least concerned about helping Negroes, while over 50 per cent of the Negroes said that it was least concerned about helping them.

The figures speak for themselves. They may provide only a partial answer to the ratings on city government, but certainly they are relevant.

To understand more fully the ratings of the city government, we have looked at the answers to some additional questions. One question asked the degree of concern city officials are thought to have for what "people like you" think. After seeing the figures in Tables 6.10 and 6.11, it is not too surprising that, with the exception of the Irish, approximately half or more of every group felt city officials are "not too concerned" (Table 6.12). And among the Irish, only 17 per cent think city officials are very concerned. Most important, there appears to be a definite and strong relationship between the citizen's perception of how concerned city officials are with what he thinks and his evaluation of how good a job the city government is doing. Eight-four per cent of all those who think city government is doing a poor job believe that city officials are "not too concerned" about what people think compared with about 20 per cent among those who think it is doing a good or very good job (Table 6.13). Thus, it is quite clear that perceived concern for people is a central part of the way people rate a city government.

Another part of the picture is reflected in the answers to a question about who is most to blame for the problems in the city. Very few Bostonians (about 16 per cent) hold the federal or state governments responsible for local problems. For the most part, they blame either the local government (36 per cent) or the people themselves (47 per cent).

Differences between groups in who is blamed for city problems exist (Table 6.14). Italians and Jews are more likely than others to blame local government. However, the patterns do not add much to our understanding of

other patterns observed in this chapter. What is clear is that the rating of how well the city government is doing is related directly to whether or not the local government is held responsible for the problems of the city (Table 6.15). The people who rate city government high are less likely to hold the city government responsible for city problems.

### Conclusion

Survey data on attitudes will necessarily deal with something other than the objective quality of the city services. But citizens can and do judge services; and their degree of satisfaction becomes an important measure of the adequacy of these services. With respect to parks and playgrounds, it seems that the various groups in Boston generally agree on what constitutes good service. The major differences are among areas. While the neighborhood in which Negroes live generally had lower ratings, none of the others were high.

At the other extreme are the evaluations of the schools. They are extreme, first, in that they appear, in many cases, to have more to do with who is doing the rating than with what is being rated. Second, there is little agreement among different groups in the city. It is true that there is some agreement among both Negroes and whites in Roxbury-South End and in North Dorchester that the schools are not as good as elsewhere in the city. However, there is much more difference between Negroes and whites in those same areas than among whites in different

areas. Even among whites, the differences between native Bostonians and those born elsewhere in the United States are at least as great as differences among whites living in the different neighborhoods of the city.

The problem for a city government is obvious: do you try to reform a school system with which many people are very satisfied, but with which about an equal number are not satisfied? If the differences result from different standards and expectations, can there be a single school system that will be more acceptable to the city as a whole? Similar questions can be asked about other key services. It may be impossible to please all segments of a heterogeneous population.

If the difficulty of pleasing different groups with services is perplexing, an equally difficult problem for local government is raised by the consistently poor ratings that it received from different groups in the city, even from those groups that were generally positive about important services. Clearly, providing the services discussed here, even at a very satisfactory level, does not necessarily win the backing of the community.

The finding that most people think the city government is most concerned about helping someone else is perhaps central to the problems that any city government must face, regardless of its political bent. It seems reasonable to speculate that there is a general sense of taxes increasing, at the same time city problems multiply and city services

do not markedly improve. In the absence of evidence that things are improving that matter to him, the average citizen may conclude that the city government must be helping someone else, or no one at all. It is interesting that those who do not hold the city government primarily responsible for city problems are most positive about the job the city government is doing. Yet there remains - even for many of those who hold the people responsible - the fact that a positive rating of a local government is tied up with the degree to which the government is seen as concerned about and responsive to people. Being responsive and communicating concern is clearly part of winning community backing; and our data suggest that this task is even harder to do, but perhaps more important to people, than delivering services.



TABLE 6.1

## RATING OF PARK AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Rating of Facility</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>					<u>Total City</u>
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	
Very good	8%	8%	7%	12%	12%	11%
Good	27	25	34	22	24	24
Fair	25	26	14	20	39	27
Poor	<u>40</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>38</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(79)	(54)	(36)	(55)	(109)	(448)

TABLE 6.2

## RATING OF TRASH AND GARBAGE COLLECTION BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Rating of Trash Collection</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>					<u>Total City</u>
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	
Very good	16%	35%	28%	40%	40%	33%
Good	38	47	50	48	50	47
Fair	29	8	8	11	10	13
Poor	<u>17</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>7</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(90)	(76)	(46)	(59)	(118)	(520)

\* Less than 0.5%

TABLE 6.3

## RATING OF POLICE SERVICES BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Rating of Police Services</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>					
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	<u>Total City</u>
Very good	9%	16%	11%	14%	31%	19%
Good	24	46	35	44	38	38
Fair	39	22	45	16	18	26
Poor	28	16	9	26	13	17
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(82)	(70)	(39)	(59)	(112)	(489)

TABLE 6.4

## RATING OF SCHOOLS BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Rating of Schools</u>						
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	<u>Total City</u>
Very good	2%	19%	9%	39%	20%	17%
Good	27	28	18	44	48	38
Fair	38	28	26	13	25	26
Poor	33	25	47	4	7	19
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(83)	(57)	(32)*	(47)	(105)	(433)

\* These figures are especially subject to sampling variability because the number of cases is small.



TABLE 6.5

## RATING OF HOW GOOD A JOB CITY GOVERNMENT IS DOING BY ETHNIC GROUP

Rating of Job of City Government	Ethnic Group					Total City
	Black	White Protestant	Jewish	Italian Catholic	Irish Catholic	
Very good	3%	6%	3%	4%	6%	5%
Good	25	17	5	30	31	25
Fair	46	57	53	42	48	46
Poor	26	20	39	24	15	24
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(88)	(66)	(40)	(54)	(114)	(489)

TABLE 6.6

## RATING OF SCHOOLS BY EDUCATION FOR WHITES ONLY

Rating of Schools	Less than high school graduate	High school graduate	Any college	All whites
Very good	21%	23%	16%	20%
Good	45	40	34	40
Fair	24	26	22	24
Poor	10	11	28	16
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(123)	(117)	(105)	(345)

TABLE 6.7

RATING OF SCHOOL SYSTEM BY PLACE OF BIRTH FOR WHITES ONLY COMPARED  
WITH RATING OF SCHOOL SYSTEM AMONG BLACKS

<u>Rating of Schools</u>	<u>Place of Birth of Whites</u>			<u>All Whites</u>	<u>All Blacks</u>
	<u>Boston SMSA</u>	<u>Other U.S.</u>	<u>Foreign</u>		
Very good	27%	14%	15%	21%	2%
Good	43	29	51	42	28
Fair	24	18	24	23	39
Poor	<u>6</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>31</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(140)	(56)	(72)	(268)	(81)

TABLE 6.8

PERCENT OF RESIDENTS IN DIFFERENT AREAS RATING DIFFERENT SERVICES AS EITHER "VERY GOOD" OR "GOOD"

Services				
	<u>Schools</u>	<u>Police Services</u>	<u>Park and Recreational Facilities</u>	<u>Trash and Garbage Collection</u>
Above Average:	Hyde Park-West Roxbury (79%)	Jamaica Plain-Roslindale (68%)	Back Bay-Beacon Hill (49%)	Jamaica Plain-Roslindale (91%)
	Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston-North End (70)	Back Bay-Beacon Hill (65)	Dorchester-Mattapan (45)	Hyde Park-West Roxbury (89)
	Jamaica Plain-Roslindale (65)	Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston-North End (61)	Allston-Brighton (41)	Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston North End (88)
		Hyde Park-West Roxbury (60)	Hyde Park-West Roxbury (40)	Dorchester-Mattapan (83)
				Allston-Brighton (83)
	Average is 55%	Average is 57%	Average is 34%	Average is 79%
Below Average:	Dorchester-Mattapan (53)	North Dorchester (56)	Jamaica Plain-Roslindale (33)	North Dorchester (75)
	North Dorchester (46)	Dorchester-Mattapan (53)	Charlestown-East Boston-South Boston-North End (31)	Back Bay-Beacon Hill (71)
	Allston-Brighton (45)	Allston-Brighton (49)	Roxbury-South End (25)	Roxbury-South End (58)
	Roxbury-South End (30)	Roxbury-South End (38)	North Dorchester (20)	
	Back Bay-Beacon Hill (25)			

TABLE 6.9

RATING OF SCHOOLS BY WHITES AND BLACKS IN ROXBURY-SOUTH END-NORTH DORCHESTER AREA

<u>Rating of Schools</u>	<u>Roxbury-South End- North Dorchester Area</u>		<u>All other whites</u>
	<u>Blacks in area</u>	<u>Whites in area</u>	
Very good	*	15%	21%
Good	25	37	41
Fair	39	31	22
Poor	36	17	16
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(68)	(58)	(292)

\* Less than 0.5%

TABLE 6.10

ETHNIC GROUP MEMBERS' PERCEPTION OF WHICH ETHNIC GROUP THE CITY GOVERNMENT IS MOST CONCERNED WITH

Group City Most Concerned With	Ethnic Group of Respondent					
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	<u>Total City</u>
Blacks	20%	45%	43%	67%	64%	50%
White Protestants	20	3	4	2	6	6
Jews	1	*	*	*	*	1
Italians	*	4	*	*	2	2
Irish	34	29	25	12	5	17
None in particular	<u>25</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(93)	(79)	(47)	(61)	(123)	(542)

\* Less than 0.5%

TABLE 6.11

ETHNIC GROUP MEMBERS' PERCEPTION OF WHICH ETHNIC GROUP THE CITY GOVERNMENT IS  
LEAST CONCERNED WITH

<u>Group City Least Concerned With</u>	<u>Ethnic Group of Respondent</u>					<u>Total City</u>
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	
Blacks	52%	15%	20%	4%	3%	15%
White Protestants	1	20	6	12	12	11
Jews	17	19	25	19	15	17
Italians	3	3	2	11	5	5
Irish	2	3	*	1	12	4
None in particular	<u>25</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>47</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>48</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(93)	(79)	(47)	(61)	(123)	(542)

\* Less than 0.5%

TABLE 6.12

## CONCERN OF CITY OFFICIALS ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Concern of City Officials</u>	<u>Ethnic Group</u>					<u>Total City</u>
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	
Very concerned	6%	16%	5%	16%	17%	13%
Fairly concerned	46	35	36	35	47	41
Not too concerned	<u>48</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>46</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(91)	(74)	(41)	(52)	(114)	(502)

TABLE 6.13

CONCERN OF CITY OFFICIALS ABOUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK BY RATING OF HOW GOOD A JOB  
CITY GOVERNMENT IS DOING

<u>Concern of City Officials</u>	<u>Rating of Job of City Government</u>		
	<u>Very Good or Good</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>
Very concerned	25%	8%	5%
Fairly concerned	54	51	11
Not too concerned	<u>21</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>84</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(146)	(222)	(108)

TABLE 6.14

## WHO IS TO BLAME FOR THE PROBLEMS OF THE CITIES BY ETHNIC GROUP

Who Is to Blame	Ethnic Group					Total City
	<u>Black</u>	<u>White Protestant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Italian Catholic</u>	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	
Federal government	6%	2%	10%	3%	9%	6%
State government	14	18	1	10	7	10
Local government	35	33	45	50	33	36
Only the people	44	46	44	37	49	47
Local government and the people	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(81)	(63)	(39)	(58)	(100)	(460)



TABLE 6.15

WHO IS TO BLAME FOR THE PROBLEMS OF THE CITIES BY RATING OF HOW GOOD A JOB  
CITY GOVERNMENT IS DOING

Who is to Blame	Rating of Job of City Government		
	Very good or good	Fair	Poor
Federal government	7%	8%	4%
State government	11	1	12
Local government	26	37	49
Only the people	54	45	34
Local government and the people	2	1	1
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(132)	(201)	(97)

VICTIMS OF CRIMES

Crime is one of the problems of city living that people are very much concerned about. For a variety of reasons, however, it is difficult to find objective measures of the real seriousness of this problem.

Both to gain some understanding of the situation in Boston now, and to have a base against which to measure change in the future, we included a set of questions on destructive actions that had been committed against people or their property during the year preceding the interview. The key question was whether the respondent, or anyone living with him, had been the victim of a crime such as "house broken into," "pocket picked," "purse snatched," "property damaged," "people beaten up," or "car stolen" during the past year.

It is important to note that there are no figures on crime in Boston in the past to which our figures can be compared; so we are unable to say whether the situation is better or worse than it used to be. We asked people whether the police had been notified about the crimes they reported, and it turned out that only about 60 per cent of the crimes reported to us had been reported to the police; so, clearly, our figures cannot be compared directly with official police figures. Indeed, some of the crimes reported to us may not even be crimes by law. Moreover, we are not sure whether people report fewer or more crimes than actually

happen to them, although we do think they probably forget some relatively minor events. Thus, what we have is an index of crimes which may be a rough one but which may nonetheless provide a useful perspective on the situation in the city of Boston.

#### Incidence of Crimes

Thirty-nine per cent of our respondents, or about four out of ten, said that they or someone living with them had been the victim of a crime during the past year. Fourteen per cent, or about one in seven, reported two or more crimes. This rate, as we would expect, was higher for the city of Boston itself than for the metropolitan Boston area as a whole, where only 28 per cent of the households reported a crime (Table 7.1).

Many people will be frightened by the magnitude of such numbers. It is essential to remember, however, that the vast majority of the crimes reported are crimes against property rather than against people. In general, the victims were not threatened personally in any way. In the majority of cases, the victims were not even present when the crime was committed. Furthermore, for the only significant category of crime in which the victim was directly involved, robbery from a person, the majority of reports were of pickpocketing or purse snatching, where the threat to the individual is usually minimal. In only about 3 per cent of the households interviewed did someone report a crime in which there

was actual or potential threat to the individual involved.<sup>1/</sup>

Although a very wide variety of crimes were reported to us in the survey, about 80 per cent of them could be classified in one of five general categories (Table 7.2):

1. Burglary, having one's house broken into, with or without significant theft, accounted for over 20 per cent of the crimes reported. Almost one in ten of all households reported a burglary. In most of these cases, something was taken; in over half the cases, the loss was valued at \$50 or more. In almost all cases, there was at least some damage done, such as a broken window or lock. And in almost no cases did people report only an attempted burglary, with no loss and no damage.

2. Stolen cars accounted for 16 per cent, or about one-sixth, of all crimes reported; in many cases, the car was recovered.

3. Property stolen from cars, including both personal property and auto parts, accounted for another 16 per cent of the crimes reported. Thus, about a third of all crimes reported had to do with cars: either the car itself was stolen or something was taken from it.

4. Robbery, property taken directly from a person, usually on the street, accounted for a further 16 per cent of the crimes reported. A majority of these were purses snatched or pockets picked and involved no violence or confrontation with the criminal.

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<sup>1/</sup> When we say only three per cent, we do not mean to imply that this is a low or satisfactory rate but simply to emphasize that such crimes account for a relatively small percentage of all the crimes that we are discussing in this chapter.

5. Vandalism to property accounted for 11 per cent of the crimes mentioned; mostly the damage involved was not serious.

This breakdown leaves 20 per cent of the reported crimes unaccounted for. These latter crimes were spread in a variety of categories, of which only one was significant: robbery from mail-boxes.

It is interesting to note that although the number of crimes reported was significantly higher in the city of Boston itself than in the metropolitan area as a whole, the pattern of types of crimes was rather similar.

#### Victims of Crimes

We should now like to consider which people were most likely to report being the victims of crimes. For this purpose, we have analyzed the incidence of all crimes reported without distinguishing between the serious and the less serious ones.

First, looking at the different neighborhoods, our data confirm what one would suspect: there are substantial differences in the rates of victimization depending on where one lives in the city.<sup>2/</sup> The neighborhood areas fall into three groups (Table 7.3). At one extreme,

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<sup>2/</sup> About 75 per cent of the crimes reported occurred in the respondent's own neighborhood. The rest occurred elsewhere in the Boston area. The figures here refer to where the person lived, not to where the crime occurred.

there are two neighborhoods in which the number of reported crimes was considerably lower than for the rest of the city: Hyde Park-West Roxbury and Charlestown-East Boston-North End-South Boston; there are three areas in which the number was about average; and there are three areas in which the number was considerably higher than the city average: Allston-Brighton, Back Bay-Beacon Hill, and Roxbury-South End.

We cannot attempt to analyze the reasons for these differences, but it is interesting to note that the two "safest" areas happen to be the neighborhoods which have, respectively, the highest and the lowest average family incomes in the city. In general, however, it is clear from Table 7.4 that more crimes are reported as total family income increases.

Moving to the different ethnic groups, we find that the Irish and Italians are less frequently the victims of crimes, while white Protestants have a rate somewhat above average. Negroes and Jews fall in the middle (Table 7.5).

Families with minor children do not differ much from families without children in the degree to which they report being victims of crimes; but the age of the head of the family is clearly significant (Tables 7.6 and 7.7). Households in which the head is under 30 years of age are victims of more crimes, while households in which the head is over 65 are victims of fewer crimes than average.

It should be recalled that we have included all types of crimes in these tables. The various groups discussed may well differ in the types of crimes to which they are exposed. Unfortunately, there are not enough cases in our sample to allow an adequate analysis along these lines, but a preliminary look at the data does indicate a few interesting differences. For example, Back Bay-Beacon Hill and Roxbury-South End, two of the higher crime areas, differ in the types of crimes reported: Roxbury-South End shows more burglaries, Back Bay-Beacon Hill more robberies from persons. It also appears that one reason for the higher rate of crimes among people with higher incomes is that they are particularly likely to report crimes in connection with cars. A key point to remember is that a group which reports a large number of crimes does not necessarily experience the most serious crimes.

#### Reporting to the Police

Finally, it is interesting to note the rates at which various crimes were reported to the police. The crime that was most consistently reported was car theft: 92 per cent of the cases of car theft reported to us were also reported to the police (Table 7.8). Burglary, including burglaries in which there was no loss of property, was reported 71 per cent of the time. The remainder of the crimes were reported only about half the time. Perhaps the most surprising finding was the low rate at



which robberies were reported. Yet these robberies almost always involved some loss. It may be that people believed the loss was not likely to be covered by insurance; or the chances of apprehending the criminal may have seemed so low that reporting to the police appeared futile. Whatever the reason, only 54 per cent of the robberies were said to have been reported to the police.

### Conclusion

There are many facets of the data that are not examined in this chapter. The tables presented are primarily an overview of the patterns of reported crime in the city. Yet it is only with survey data such as these that we can begin to put the problem of crime into perspective. Close to half the households in Boston reported that they experienced some threat to themselves or their property in the past year, which gives us clear indication of how central to life in the city these crime data are. Yet, often, when one thinks of the crime problem, one thinks of rape, murder, and kidnapping. Such events are terrible, of course, but they constitute a very small percentage of crime as most people experience it.

Perhaps the most valuable outcome of this study will come as we repeat the measure in subsequent years. For the present, it is very difficult to determine whether the crime rate has really got worse over the years or not. Everyone thinks it has, but it is difficult for us



to tell with the figures presently available. This is particularly true for the less serious, but much more prevalent, crimes such as robbery and burglary of which so many are not reported to the police. With continued study, we should also be able to learn something of the conditions under which different crimes are most likely to occur.

These are all potentials of the research. This chapter makes just a start; but we think it is an important start on one of the central problems of city life today.

TABLE 7.1

NUMBER OF CRIMES AGAINST HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS IN PAST YEAR FOR CITY OF BOSTON  
AND METROPOLITAN BOSTON

<u>Number of Crimes</u>	<u>City of Boston</u>	<u>Metropolitan Boston</u>
None	61%	72%
One	25	19
Two or more	14	9
TOTAL	100%	100%
(N)	(552)	(300)*

\* Estimated base on which sampling errors can be computed.

TABLE 7.2

TYPES OF CRIMES AGAINST HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS IN PAST YEAR FOR CITY OF BOSTON  
AND METROPOLITAN BOSTON

<u>Types of Crimes</u>	<u>City of Boston</u>	<u>Metropolitan Boston</u>
Burglary-breaking into houses	21%	18%
Car theft	16	15
Theft of car parts or goods from car	16	18
Robbery from persons, including pickpocketing, purse snatching	16	16
Property destruction, vandalism	11	17
Other *	<u>20</u>	<u>16</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%
NUMBER OF CRIMES REPORTED	(315)	(200) **

\* The only item of note in this category is mailboxes robbed, which accounted for as much as five per cent of crimes reported.

\*\* Estimated base on which sampling errors can be computed.



TABLE 7.4

## NUMBER OF CRIMES\* BY TOTAL FAMILY INCOME

Number of Crimes	Total Family Income				
	Less than \$3,000	\$3,000 - \$5,999	\$6,000 - \$9,999	\$10,000 - \$14,999	\$15,000 or more
None	73%	63%	66%	46%	57%
One	26	25	16	38	22
Two or more	1	12	18	16	21
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(77)	(133)	(160)	(79)	(42)

\* per household in the past year

TABLE 7.5

## NUMBER OF CRIMES\* BY ETHNIC GROUP

Number of Crimes	Ethnic Group					
	Black	White Protestant	Jewish	Italian Catholic	Irish Catholic	Others
None	61%	52%	57%	72%	74%	60%
One	24	30	34	18	16	25
Two or more	15	18	9	10	10	15
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(92)	(79)	(47)	(60)	(122)	(146)

\* per household in the past year

TABLE 7.6

NUMBER OF CRIMES\* BY HOUSEHOLDS WITH AND WITHOUT MINOR CHILDREN

<u>Number of Crimes</u>	<u>Households with children</u>	<u>Households without children</u>
None	62%	65%
One	24	23
Two or more	<u>14</u>	<u>12</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%
(N)	(229)	(318)

\* per household in the past year

TABLE 7.7

NUMBER OF CRIMES\* BY AGE OF FAMILY HEAD

Number of Crimes	Age of Family Head			
	<u>Under 30</u>	<u>30-49</u>	<u>50-64</u>	<u>65 or older</u>
None	55%	63%	64%	72%
One	32	20	23	19
Two or more	<u>13</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>9</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(111)	(188)	(132)	(108)

\* per household in the past year



TABLE 7.8

WHETHER OR NOT CRIME REPORTED TO POLICE BY TYPE OF CRIME

Reported to Police	Type of Crime					
	<u>Burglary</u>	<u>Car theft</u>	<u>Theft from car</u>	<u>Robbery from persons</u>	<u>Property destruction</u>	<u>Other</u>
Yes	71%	92%	43%	54%	48%	45%
No	<u>29</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>55</u>
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
(N)	(63)	(50)	(47)	(50)	(33)	(53)

## THE USES OF RESEARCH

What good do surveys do? The avowed purpose of the Survey Research Program is to do "good." In what ways does the Boston Area Survey accomplish this goal?

It would be easy to say that the information collected, and the resulting analysis, add to the general fund of knowledge, which in turn will eventually help to make a better world. This may be true; but we do not think it is a sufficient answer.

The data that we collect relate directly to issues that are being considered now by Boston city officials and by others. The following are examples of such issues:

1. Is rent control desirable or necessary?
2. Should more low-cost housing be built?
3. Should more effort be made to attract industry into the central city?
4. What should be done about racially imbalanced schools?
5. What changes should be made in MBTA service?

Each of these questions has many complexities; and a survey by itself cannot offer the solutions. However, it can help to provide factual data, so that discussion of the problems can be focused on the values and costs involved.

In any discussion of rent control, for example, it is critically important to know how much renters are paying, how much rents have risen in the past few years, and how much incomes have gone up in the same

period. Such knowledge documents the size and extent of the problem as a basis for deciding what, if anything, the community wants to do.

In an assessment of the need for additional low-income housing, and the type of housing required, it is essential to know the number and characteristics (size, number of children) of families who would be eligible for it.

In an evaluation of the need for new industry, it is important to know the number of men who go outside the city to work. And if we wish to attract new industry, we should know something about the skills of the city population.

When major decisions have to be made about the school system, it is essential to know how the population as a whole, and particularly those with school-age children, feel about racially imbalanced schools and about the various proposed solutions. What one reads in papers or hears from leaders may or may not accurately reflect the public feelings on such issues.

In assessing the adequacy of the transit system, one must know how many people, and which people, rely on the MBTA to get to work.

This list does no more than touch on the sorts of problems to which the 1969 Boston Area Survey relates. On almost any issue the people required to make decisions have to assume for themselves how people feel, what they are doing, and what they will do. These decision makers gather information wherever they can; but there are some kinds of information that only survey studies can provide. We try to collect just such data.

Perhaps the most distinctive aspect of the Program, however, is the emphasis placed on the dissemination of the data. Reports such as this one provide one means of making the information known. In addition, most of the data we collect are available at a nominal cost to anyone in the community who wants them. We have provided hundreds of tables to city agencies, voluntary organizations, and others in the Boston area. For many purposes, the Boston Area Survey provides the most useful set of available data on Boston.

Let us cite one specific area in which the availability of the Survey data can be and has proved to be particularly important. More and more, community and neighborhood groups are trying to initiate change to better their communities. Often they have to seek support from government sources - either local or federal. A new school is needed, for example, or more playgrounds, or a day care center. Such local groups are often at a disadvantage when they are called in to document or justify their need. Yet, government sources of funds generally require the presentation of facts and figures. The data from this Program are just as available to citizens groups as they are to government officials. One of our principal goals is to be a source of accurate information that can be used by any citizen who needs to know something about the greater Boston population.

## DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

### Samples - How They Work

Almost all of the work of the Survey Research Program is based on interviews with samples of the population. Instead of talking with all the people in Boston, for example, we talk with maybe only 500, as we did in this year's Boston Area Survey. One can well ask how we can describe, with any accuracy, a population of 600,000 after talking with only 500. Yet, this is essentially what we can do.

The basic requirements in sampling a population is to use a procedure that gives each household the same chance of being included. There are two steps in this process. First, the selection of addresses must be made so that each address in the study area has an equal chance of falling into the sample. We give each block in the area a weight based on the number of people who live on it. These weights are based on 1960 U. S. Census data, which we update for our purposes by actually visiting blocks to identify new construction. Thus, the chances of a given block being selected depend upon the number of people who live on that block. When the blocks have been selected, then the houses and apartments on these blocks are listed. From this listing several specific addresses are chosen at random. The interviewer visits the specified addresses and interviews an adult in the household, who is also randomly selected from all the adults in the household.

But not everyone is at home or wants to be interviewed when the interviewer calls. If we took only those people who were readily available and willing, we would have a very biased sample, with too many housewives and retired persons, too few people who work or have no families. Thus, the second step in the survey is to obtain an interview with the individual who was selected. We allow no substitutions of people who are easier to find for those who are more difficult. Often our interviewers need to make as many as ten calls to find a convenient time to interview the selected individual.

Experience has shown that when these procedures are carried out carefully, the results from such a sample survey are very comparable to the results obtained from a complete census. The last complete census for which data are available was conducted in 1960. Some population changes have occurred in the past ten years which make it difficult for us to compare our data exactly with that census. But some things we should not expect to change much. The following tables illustrate the comparability of our sample data with the 1960 Census data.

TABLE A-1

## HOUSE TENURE IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

<u>Home Tenure</u>	<u>1969 BOSTON AREA STUDY</u>	<u>1960 U.S. CENSUS</u>
Renters	70%	72%
Home owners	28	27
Other	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	100%	100%

TABLE A-2

## NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLDS IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

<u>No. of People</u>	<u>1969 BOSTON AREA STUDY</u>	<u>1960 U.S. CENSUS</u>
1	24%	25%
2	29	27
3 or 4	27	30
5 or more	<u>20</u>	<u>18</u>
Total	100%	100%

It can be seen that the percentages based on our 1969 sample survey are very similar to the figures obtained from the 1960 U.S. Census. However, even when there are differences, it is possible that these reflect real changes over time rather than an error in our results.

### The Questionnaire

The questionnaire - the list of questions each respondent is asked - is the end product of a series of steps. First, we need to spell out the specific objectives of the research. In 1969, the following objectives were among the most important:

1. To find out about patterns of moves - where Boston people were born, where they grew up, when they moved to the Boston area, when they moved into their present neighborhood, how permanent they felt in their present location, and where they would move to if they were planning to move.

2. To find out about housing costs, so that we could compare renters with home-owners, so that we could compare costs in different parts of the city, and so that we could determine how much of their incomes people had to spend on their housing.

3. To find out how people rated the city services in different parts of the city.

4. To identify the victims of crimes, so that we could compare different areas in terms of the number and type of crimes that occur,



and also so that we could establish a base rate against which to measure change in crime rates at some later date.

5. To find out what the neighborhoods meant to people - what they liked and did not like, why they lived where they did - as a basis for a better understanding of people's living requirements.

When the objectives have been spelled out, we then begin to construct a set of questions. This process takes considerable care, for two important reasons:

First, each question must be perfectly clear so that it means the same thing to all people. Thus, a question such as, 'Where did you live before moving here?' will not do. What is 'here'? Does it mean, this house, this neighborhood, the Boston area? The answers will be different depending on the interpretation.

Second, each question must be worded so that it can be read without change to each respondent. This requirement may seem overly restrictive to those who have not worked with survey data. However, experience has shown that when interviewers are required to reword questions, we end up with answers that cannot be compared with one another.

Before a questionnaire is printed it goes through many revisions and is tested on many different people. At each point, the revisions are designed to make the question clearer, to make the interviewer's job easier, and to better meet the goals of the research.

## The Research Process

Now, we have a questionnaire and a list of addresses - what are the next steps?

1. To each selected address, we send a letter introducing the study. Since we do not know who lives in these households, the letter is addressed to the "Head of the Household."

2. An interviewer then calls at the address. Her first task is to find out who lives in the household - not by name but by relationship to the household head.

3. Then, from all adults living at the household, one adult is chosen to be interviewed. This is not an interviewer choice. The decision is made for her by a reference to a table that is printed in the interview form. These tables are so designed that each adult has an equal chance of being the respondent.

4. She then arranges a convenient time to interview the chosen person. In 1969, the interviews averaged about an hour in length.

5. The interview forms are then returned to the office and given a number. After the interview is completed, the address is never used to identify a respondent. All interviews are locked up so that an unauthorized person could not have access to them. <sup>1/</sup>

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<sup>1/</sup> These are only a few of the many steps we take to insure that the answers people give are held in strict confidence and never associated with a name. The confidentiality of responses is absolutely critical to us in our work. Each person working for the Program signs a statement that reads, in part, "All information about respondents gained during the conduct of research is privileged information, whether it concerns the interview itself or includes extraneous observations of the respondent's house, family and activities."

6. Interviews are then coded. Coding is the process whereby answers are translated into numbers that can be handled by computers. In many cases, this is just a matter of coding age 45 as a "45," or coding males as "1," females as "2." The more difficult task is to code answers to open-ended questions such as "What is the one thing you would like the city government to work on most?" In such cases, great care is exercised to develop a code that will capture the meaning of each answer while at the same time putting similar answers together.

The work of coders is checked carefully, and the reliability of their work usually averages around 99 percent.

7. The coded interviews are then punched onto cards. The answers given by each respondent in the 1969 Boston Area Survey filled almost ten cards containing 80 columns each. At that point, the analysis begins.

### Interviewing

One of the most important links in the research process is the interviewer. So, a special word is in order about her.

First, who is she? Although interviewers come in all ages, shapes, and sizes, probably a majority are women who have families and whose children are in school or have grown. For most interviewers, this is a part-time job and is not a main source of income. They say they like the work because there is some flexibility in the hours, because they enjoy the people they meet, and because they feel they are

contributing to the community through their work.

Most of our interviewers have not had previous interviewing experience. In general we prefer it that way, because we find our standards and procedures are somewhat more rigorous than people are likely to have experienced elsewhere.

Training is a continuous process. It begins with about a week of sessions on the principles of social research and general interviewing procedures. We feel that an interviewer should know not only how to ask about questions but why she asks them and how her work relates to the total research process.

Taking an interview, of course, and asking questions are important too. There are many techniques that an interviewer must learn. One main goal of the training, it may surprise some to know, is to eliminate differences between interviewers. Ideally, no matter which of our interviewers knocked on an individual's door, the answers we obtained would be the same. To this end, there are three key rules:

1. Questions must be asked exactly as worded, so that every respondent is asked exactly the same questions.

2. If further clarification is needed for a given question, the interviewer must be what we call "non-directive" in her probing; that is, she must not lead the respondent toward one particular answer. An example might be helpful:

Question: "What is the worst thing about living in this neighborhood?"

Answer: "The people."

It is not clear what this answer means, so the interviewer must ask for clarification. The following would unacceptable:

"You mean they aren't friendly?"

"You mean how rich they are?"

"Do you mean their kids, or what?"

In each case the interviewer would be suggesting answers that the respondent may or may not have had in mind. Acceptable probes would be the following:

"Could you tell me more about that?"

"How do you mean that?"

It may seem easy and obvious to do the right thing. However, one of the most difficult interviewer tasks, and one of the best signs of a good interviewer, is to avoid assuming that she knows what the respondent means before he has said what he means.

3. The third key task is to write down exactly what the respondent says in his or her own words. Interviewers must not summarize, because here again each interviewer might summarize the same answer in a slightly different way.

These technical requirements and others are very important; and they can be taught. The most important requirement, however, is difficult to teach. The interviewer must convey to each respondent that what he says is important. Surveys are desirable and necessary only because each individual knows a lot of things that no one else knows: how he himself feels, what he has done, what he thinks will happen. Each respondent is an expert about himself and his life. We do surveys because what the individual knows is very important. The good interviewer conveys this sense to the people that she talks to.

## RELIABILITY OF THE DATA

Our Boston Area Survey involved interviews with a sample of the Boston population. The responses given provided, therefore, not the certain characteristics and attitudes of the whole population but an estimate of those characteristics and attitudes. As we have said earlier, we know that samples carefully selected can give us information very close to what would be obtained by interviewing the total population. However, we must remember that any sampling procedure contains the possibility of errors. These may arise (1) in the collection of the data - "reporting" and "nonresponse" errors - and (2) in the choice of individuals to be interviewed who may differ by chance from the population at large -- "sampling" errors.

### Reliability of the Data

1. Reporting errors are kept to a minimum by careful training of the interviewers, by gaining the confidence of respondents so that they will answer the questions to the best of their ability, and by checking the interviews for inconsistencies.

Nonresponse errors arise because individuals selected for the survey refuse to be interviewed or are not at home after repeated call-backs. However persevering the interviewer, there are bound to be some individuals who cannot or will not be reached at all.



In our survey, we had a sample of 719 addresses at which there was an eligible respondent, after the elimination of vacant houses, commercial establishments, and other addresses at which no one lived permanently. Interviews were conducted with the selected respondents at 552 of these addresses - a response rate of 77 per cent.

TABLE A-3

DISPOSITION OF SAMPLE ADDRESSES IN CITY OF BOSTON

Interview taken	77%
No interview taken	23
Refusal	16
Not at home after repeated calls	4
Other	3
Total	100%
Number of addresses	719

The response rate for households outside the city of Boston was 82 per cent. Since most analyses will focus on the city population, details on nonresponse outside of Boston are not presented here but are available on request.

It is important to evaluate the degree of bias introduced because of nonresponse, and we try, therefore, to compare respondents and non-respondents. Interviewers are asked to record as much information



as possible about nonrespondents. Although sometimes they have to make guesses, and at other times they have no information at all, their descriptions provide some clues about the people we miss.

The only differences of note that we can record between those interviewed and those not interviewed in the Boston Area Survey are that the latter group included relatively more whites and also relatively more households in which there were no children. The bias caused by nonresponse was trivial for estimates of the racial composition of Boston;<sup>1/</sup> however, the sample probably included 3 or 4 per cent too many families with children. In most respects, the effect of nonresponse on the reliability of sample estimates appeared to be negligible.

2. The extent of the sampling error can be determined if it is known exactly how, and with what probability, the sample was selected from the total population. The size of the sampling error varies in relation (a) to the size of the sample selected and (b) to the degree of variation in the values for any given characteristic or attitude.

If all the reporting, nonresponse, and sampling errors were known, the true population values could be obtained. However, only the sampling errors can be calculated, which means that the "central" rather than the true population value can be estimated. By "central" population value is meant the value that would be obtained if the whole population had

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<sup>1/</sup> A one per cent adjustment has been made in the text for all tables presenting race.

been interviewed. The other sources of errors would still remain, but the error caused by interviewing only a sample of the population would be eliminated.

Sampling errors have not been calculated yet for this study, but a similar sample in the past may be used to estimate how far on either side of the sample values the central population values can be expected to lie 95 times out of 100.<sup>2/</sup> Since the sampling error varies, in general, with the size of the sample and the degree of variation in the characteristic measured, Table A-4, (which is a generalized table of sampling errors) takes both these factors into account. Thus, 39 per cent of the 552 families interviewed in the city report that they have been the victim of at least one crime, the sampling error is 5 percentage points. This means that there are 95 chances in 100 that the central population value lies within plus or minus 5 points of 39 per cent. That is, there are only 5 chances in 100 that less than 34 per cent or more than 44 per cent of all the families in Boston were victims of a crime. The table shows that when there is a smaller percentage reported in the sample then the sampling error is smaller, and when there is a smaller subgroup then the sampling error is larger.

The sampling error varies somewhat for the different findings of the survey. Despite these differences, Table A-4 can give a general

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<sup>2/</sup> The actual sampling errors for this particular sample may be either larger or smaller than those in the table, but the figures should provide a reasonable guide.

picture of the degree of variability that should be attached to the specific percentages reported in the text. The table was constructed on the basis of estimates of the average sampling errors for a number of characteristics from the study that had varying sample sizes and proportions.

There is a further consideration. It is important to know whether a difference between two values obtained in the sample is "statistically significant." That is, would the difference still exist if other samples of the population were interviewed or if the whole population were surveyed? Calculation of statistical significance depends both on the size of the groups being compared and on the percentages obtained. Table A-5 shows the sampling errors of differences. Thus, if a crime was reported by 45 per cent of the 111 households in the sample which had a household head aged 21-29 years, and if a crime was reported by only 28 per cent of the 108 households with a head aged over 65, then there are 95 chances in 100 that the difference was not due to chance. (The table shows that a difference of about 13 per cent would be significant with groups of this size and with these percentages.) This means that a difference of this magnitude (45 minus 28, or 17) would arise through chance fluctuations or because this particular sample was selected considerably less than 5 times in 100.

TABLE A-4

## APPROXIMATE SAMPLING ERRORS FOR THE BOSTON AREA STUDY

Chances are 95 in 100 that the central value lies within the reported value, plus or minus the number of percentage points shown in this table.

Sample Size	Sampling Errors for Reported Percentage Around			
	5 or 95%	10 or 90%	20 or 80%	50%
50	-	-	12	16
75	-	7	10	13
100	-	7	9	11
150	4	5	7	8
175	4	5	7	8
200	3	5	6	8
250	3	4	6	7
300	3	4	5	6
400	2	3	4	6
500	2	3	4	5
750	2	3	4	5

TABLE A-5

## SAMPLING ERRORS OF DIFFERENCES

95% Probability

Differences required for significance in comparisons of percentages from two different sub-groups

Size of Sample or Group	75	100	200	350	500	750	1000	1500
For Proportions from About 30% to 70%								
75	15	14	13	12	12	11	11	11
100		13	12	11	10	10	10	10
200			10	9	8	8	7	7
350				7	7	6	6	6
500					6	6	5	5
750						5	5	4
For Proportions Around 20% or 80%								
75	13	13	11	10	10	10	10	10
100		11	10	9	9	9	9	9
200			8	7	7	7	7	6
350				6	6	6	5	5
500					5	5	5	5
750						5	4	4
For Proportions Around 10% or 90%								
75	10	10	8	8	8	8	8	7
100		9	8	7	7	7	7	7
200			6	6	6	5	5	5
350				5	5	4	4	4
500					4	4	4	3
750						3	3	3
For Proportions Around 5% or 95%								
200			5	4	4	4	4	4
350				4	3	3	3	3
500					3	3	3	3
750						3	2	2





